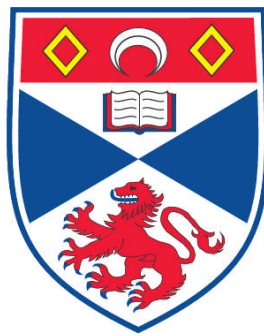


**THE THIRD WORLD EVANGELICAL MISSIOLOGY
OF ORLANDO E. COSTAS**

Jeffrey E. Tippner

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews**



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UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
ST MARY'S COLLEGE

**The Third World Evangelical Missiology
Of Orlando E. Costas**

A Thesis Submitted to The Faculty of Divinity
In Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Jeffrey E. Tippner

ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND
NOVEMBER 2010

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the missiological writings of Orlando E. Costas (1943-1987), particularly *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (1974); *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America* (1976); *Christ Outside the Gate* (1982); and *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (1989). From the early 1970s until his death in 1987 he wrote over 130 articles and 12 books in both Spanish and English that addressed key missiological concerns. A careful reading of a selection of Costas's texts oriented around a hymn, a gospel song, a psalm, and a poem provides the shape of this thesis.

This thesis argues that Costas formulated a Third World evangelical missiology. *Chapter one* investigates what Costas's autobiographical material expressed about his positions on conversion, Protestant evangelicalism, missiology, and those living on the 'periphery' of life. *Chapter two* recognizes his commitment to the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean in particular and the Third World in general. *Chapter three* explores Costas's analysis of the Latin American Protestant Church in a revolutionary situation in the continent and *chapter four* examines Costas's survey and critical appraisal of Latin American liberation theology. *Chapter five* recognizes the pastoral shape of his missiology.

Chapter six explores his critical interaction with two more conservative evangelical missiological positions, the Church Growth Movement and Peter Beyerhaus and the Frankfurt Declaration, and *chapter seven* surveys the discussion among the international evangelical community regarding the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. *Chapter eight* examines Costas's *Liberating News* as an expression of Third World evangelical missiology. *Chapter nine* considers the theological issue of penal substitutionary atonement and Costas's missiology. The thesis concludes with an appraisal of the issues and contributions of Costas's Third World evangelical missiology to current missiological discussion.

DECLARATIONS

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Jeffrey Tippner, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 86,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September 2003 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in September 2004; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2003 and 2010.

Date signature of candidate

2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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Amazing grace! how sweet the sound

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

John Newton (1725-1807)

A Cuban-Nicaraguan Gospel Song

Enviado soy de Dios
mi mano lista está
para constuir con él
un mundo fraternal.

Los ángeles no son
enviados a cambiar
un mundo de dolor
por un mundo de paz,
Me ha tocado a mí
hacerlo realidad,
Ayúdame Señor,
hacer tu voluntad.

Sent by the Lord am I
My hands are ready now,
To help construct a just
and peaceful loving world.

The angels cannot change
a world of pain and hurt,
Into a world of love,
of justice and of peace,
The task is mine to do,
make it reality,
Oh help me, God, obey,
help me to do your will.

Tr. Rose and Orlando Costas

Psalm 106 (NIV-BR)

- ¹ Praise the LORD.
Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures for ever.
- ² Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the LORD or fully declare his praise?
³ Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right.
- ⁴ Remember me, O LORD, when you show favour to your people,
come to my aid when you save them,
⁵ that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may share in the joy of your nation and join your inheritance in giving praise.
- ⁶ We have sinned, even as our fathers did; we have done wrong and acted wickedly.
⁷ When our fathers were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles;
they did not remember your many kindnesses,
and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea.
- ⁸ Yet he saved them for his name's sake, to make his mighty power known.
⁹ He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up;
he led them through the depths as through a desert.
¹⁰ He saved them from the hand of the foe;
from the hand of the enemy he redeemed them.
- ¹¹ The waters covered their adversaries; not one of them survived.
¹² Then they believed his promises and sang his praise.
- ¹³ But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.
- ¹⁴ In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wasteland they put God to the test.
¹⁵ So he gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease upon them.
- ¹⁶ In the camp they grew envious of Moses and of Aaron,
who was consecrated to the LORD.
- ¹⁷ The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan; it buried the company of Abiram.
¹⁸ Fire blazed among their followers; a flame consumed the wicked.
- ¹⁹ At Horeb they made a calf and worshipped an idol cast from metal.
²⁰ They exchanged their Glory for an image of a bull, which eats grass.
- ²¹ They forgot the God who saved them, who had done great things in Egypt,
²² miracles in the land of Ham and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.
²³ So he said he would destroy them --had not Moses, his chosen one,
stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them.
- ²⁴ Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe his promise.
²⁵ They grumbled in their tents and did not obey the LORD.
- ²⁶ So he swore to them with uplifted hand that he would make them fall in the desert,
²⁷ make their descendants fall among the nations and scatter them throughout the lands.
- ²⁸ They yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor and ate sacrifices offered to lifeless gods;
²⁹ they provoked the LORD to anger by their wicked deeds,
and a plague broke out among them.
-

³⁰ But Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was checked.
³¹ This was credited to him as righteousness for endless generations to come.

³² By the waters of Meribah they angered the LORD,
and trouble came to Moses because of them;
³³ for they rebelled against the Spirit of God, and rash words came from Moses' lips.

³⁴ They did not destroy the peoples as the LORD had commanded them,
³⁵ but they mingled with the nations and adopted their customs.

³⁶ They worshipped their idols, which became a snare to them.

³⁷ They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons.

³⁸ They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan,
and the land was desecrated by their blood.

³⁹ They defiled themselves by what they did;
by their deeds they prostituted themselves.

⁴⁰ Therefore the LORD was angry with his people and abhorred his inheritance.

⁴¹ He handed them over to the nations, and their foes ruled over them.

⁴² Their enemies oppressed them and subjected them to their power.

⁴³ Many times he delivered them,
but they were bent on rebellion and they wasted away in their sin.

⁴⁴ But he took note of their distress when he heard their cry;
⁴⁵ for their sake he remembered his covenant and out of his great love he relented.

⁴⁶ He caused them to be pitied by all who held them captive.

⁴⁷ Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise.

⁴⁸ Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

Let all the people say, "Amen!"

Praise the LORD.

‘It Is Not Finished, Lord’

It is not finished, Lord.
There is not one thing done!
There is no battle of my life
That I have really won.

And now I come to tell Thee
How I fought to fail.
My human, all too human, tale
of weakness and futility.

And yet there is a faith in me
That Thou wilt find in it
One word that Thou canst take
And make
The centre of a sentence
In Thy book of poetry

I cannot read the writing of the years,
My eyes are full of tears,
It gets all blurred and won't make sense;
It's full of contradictions
Like the scribbling of a child.

I can but hand it in, and hope
That Thy great mind, which reads
The writings of so many years,
Wilt understand this scrawl
And what it strives to say—but leaves unsaid.

I cannot write it over, the stars are coming out,
My body needs its bed.
I have no strength for more,
So it must stand or fall—dear Lord,
That's all.

G.A. Studdert Kennedy

INTRODUCTION

Orlando E. Costas (1943-1987) began his missiological journey in the tension of the 1960s and his missiology was shaped by the challenges of that era. Ever since he was a young adult he had been painfully conscious of injustice, oppression, and poverty everywhere in the world. Through the course of his lifetime he studied and interacted with a variety of missiological perspectives but went through a process through which he elaborated his own distinct theology of mission.

Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s Costas contributed at least twelve books and over 100 articles in both Spanish and English that purposefully reflected on the nature and means of the Church's engagement with the world. The missiological focus is evident in the titles of some of his books: *La Iglesia y Su Misión Evangelizadora* (The Church and Her Evangelizing Mission); *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización* (Towards a Theology of Mission); *¿Qué Significa Evangelizar Hoy?* (What Does It Mean to Evangelize Today?); *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World*; *The Integrity of Mission: The Inner Life and Outreach of the Church*; *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom*; and posthumously, *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization*.

These books and articles expressed Costas's critical reflection on his own missionary praxis. In some of his earlier writings he reflected on his experience of pastoral ministry as one expression of Christian mission. He served four Spanish-speaking congregations in the USA; conducted a number of evangelistic programmes; directed the 'Evangelism in Depth' programme in Latin America; taught courses on pastoral theology, preaching, and evangelism at the Latin American Biblical Seminary in San José, Costa Rica; and founded the Latin American Evangelical Centre for Pastoral Studies. Wherever Costas went he interacted as minister, evangelist, and servant with people in a variety of different contexts. Costas's missiological reflections thus arose from his experiences as a pastor, preacher, evangelist, and pastoral educator.

Missiology was also the focus of Costas's postgraduate studies and academic career. He wrote his doctoral dissertation, *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology in Mainline Protestantism: 1969-1974*, under the supervision of

Johannes Verkuyl at the Free University of Amsterdam.¹ Costas served as dean of the Latin American Biblical Seminary in Costa Rica, as professor of missiology and director of the Hispanic studies programme at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and as dean of school and Andoniram Judson Professor of Missiology at Andover-Newton Theological School in Newton, Massachusetts, where he was at the time of his death.² He also participated in the Latin American Theological Fellowship and the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians.

Statement of Enquiry and Thesis

The research and reflection for this thesis began by attempting to discern who Orlando Costas's main conversation partners were in terms of the development of his missiology. But the primary purpose of the research and reflection was to examine his published writings in order to determine the nature of the missiology that developed in response to his primary conversation partners. I argue that Costas's published writings reflect that evangelicals and the people and issues of the Third World were his primary conversation partners, and that his writings expressed a *Third World evangelical missiology*.

Central Concepts

The following are brief definitions of the words and concepts used in the thesis.

Third World: the term is not used in this thesis as a geographical or economic designation, but as 'a self-designation of peoples who have been excluded from power and authority to shape their own lives and destiny.'³

Evangelical: refers primarily to a subdivision of Protestant Christianity that has developed its own institutions, customs, and culture and that has been characterized by conversionism, biblicism, crucicentrism, and activism.⁴ Protestant evangelicals are distinguished from ecumenical Protestants by these four characteristics.

Missiology: is viewed in two senses in this dissertation. The first sense is concerned with the theology of mission, or 'the systematic consideration of the nature of the Christian mission.' The second sense deals with 'mission studies,' that is, 'the whole range of studies appropriate to the understanding of mission, its context and practical application.'⁵ Primarily *missiology* refers to the intentional theological reflection on the Church's engagement with the world so that the Church is more efficacious in her

¹ Verkuyl was Professor and Head of the Department of Missiology and Evangelism at the Free University of Amsterdam.

² Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary was recently renamed Palmer Theological Seminary.

³ Virginia Fabella, "Third World," in *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, ed. Virginia Fabella and R. S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000).

⁴ The four characteristics of evangelicalism are taken from: D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London / New York: Routledge, 1989), 2-17.

⁵ Andrew F. Walls, "Missiology," in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. Nicholas Lossky, et al. (Geneva / Grand Rapids, MI: WCC Publications / Wm B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1991).

mission to the world. Here *Church* refers to both the Church in the macro (universal) sense as well as in the micro (congregational and denominational) sense. Furthermore, *Church* is used in an inclusive sense to include religious people from the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox traditions while including those who do not align themselves with any one of those traditions. *World* refers to all aspects of human life and society.

Third World evangelical: a term that this thesis has coined to describe First World and Third World Christians who, while affirming the evangelical convictions of conversionism, biblicism, crucicentrism, and activism, live out their Christian faith in solidarity with Third World peoples.⁶

Third world evangelical missiology: theologies of mission and mission studies that, while being anchored in the four essential characteristics of evangelicalism, are done in solidarity with peoples living in Third World social conditions.

Methodology and Resources

The methodology has been to do a careful reading of as many of the nearly 140 primary sources written by Costas as were able to be obtained and to reflect on the texts. Out of this has emerged the thesis statement. There has been continued reading of the primary texts and selected secondary texts in order to test and shape the thesis.

Four Points of Reference

Four points of reference—a hymn, a gospel song, a psalm, and a poem—have been helpful in the careful reading of Costas's writings. They are placed at pages i-v of the thesis. The hymn, the gospel song, and the poem yielded clues for a better understanding of Costas's missiological writings. The psalm provided a point of reference for guiding interaction with Costas's texts.

The hymn is 'Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,' found on page i of the thesis. Many evangelicals consider it the anthem of evangelicalism, especially by the types of evangelicalism found in North America and the United Kingdom. It represents a variety of evangelical cultures. Costas's faith was shaped by several different evangelical cultures as a young man, and he engaged with others throughout his life as a missiologist. His writings reveal that in some way or another he was always interacting with some form of evangelicalism. The hymn represents the evangelical culture that played a most significant part in the shaping of Costas's missiology. It marks the first of two conversation partners that were significant in the formation of Costas's missiology.

⁶ To do theology *in solidarity* with Third World peoples means 'to share solidly the other person's struggle for justice, peace, and harmony' (Elizabeth S. Tapia, "Solidarity," in *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, ed. Virginia Fabella and R. S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000)).

The gospel song is a Nicaraguan gospel song, although it is actually a Cuban gospel that Rose and Orlando Costas learned from Nicaraguan Christians, and then translated into English.⁷ It is translated and reproduced on page ii of the thesis. Referring to this song, Costas shared that ‘This, in fact, is what I am committed to. This is my task and this is my prayer.’⁸ The song expressed the divine commission that Costas committed himself to obey: ‘to help construct a just and peaceful loving world.’⁹ The song became the motto of his classes and administration at Andover Newton Theological School and was sung at his inauguration as Dean and Judson Professor.¹⁰ The gospel song was the second of two conversation partners that were significant in the formation of Costas’s missiology.

The psalm is Psalm 106. It is theological reflection on the history of Israel in the wilderness after the Exodus event. It is an ancient self-contained literary unit of Hebrew poetry that serves as a point of reference for engagement with Costas’s material. Starting with the reflection section of chapter two, the psalm is used to offer points of comparison for interacting with Costas’s texts that were examined in each chapter. It offers a different point of view from what Costas presents. Psalm 106 did not contribute to the formation of Costas’s missiology, but it is a significant conversation partner with Costas’s writings because it often presented a contrasting narrative to of Costas.

The poem is ‘It Is Not Finished, Lord,’ by G.A. Studdert Kennedy.¹¹ In the final months of his life, Costas used the poem to address a national gathering of the American Baptist Church. He interpreted the poem to mean that ‘in spite of our unfinished work, the ministry goes on. Our partnership with God and with one another is the guarantee that our unfinished agendas will be continued by those who follow in our footsteps.’¹² One cannot but wonder if Costas was speaking these words to himself as well as those assembled before him. The poem serves as a reference point for understanding the reason for this thesis on Costas’s missiology. He was a prolific missiologist and an esteemed missionary statesman, but he died young and with his work unfinished. He expected that his unfinished agenda would be picked up by others following in his footsteps. The reason

⁷ Orlando E. Costas, ‘Missiology: From the Underside of History, interview by Dannette G. Costas,’ (Newton Center, MA: Manuscript from taped interview, 1985), 7.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Orlando E. Costas, ‘The Seminary as Catalyst for Mission,’ *The Judson Bulletin Special Issue* (December 1984): 9.

¹⁰ Costas, ‘Missiology: Underside,’ 7. Gabriel Fackre also referred to Costas’s affection for the song in his introduction to: Orlando E. Costas, *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989), xiii.

¹¹ Orlando E. Costas, ‘Forward in Partnership,’ *Latin American Pastoral Issues* 16 (1989): 68-69.

¹² Ibid., 69.

for this thesis is to join with a small group of others who seek to follow in Costas's footsteps and engage with him in order to pick up the agenda he could not finish. The thesis is directed at the academic missiological community, evangelical as well as those who are from other Christian traditions. It is hoped that the missiological writings of Orlando Costas can once again be brought to the missiological community for renewed discussion.

Previous Research

This thesis is like a 1993 PhD thesis that surveyed and assessed the missiology of Costas¹³ Whereas the earlier one examined Costas's missiology in a general way, the present one argues that Costas's missiological writings express a Third World evangelical missiology. There has been significant research that has focused on specific themes in the life and thought of Costas: his theology of evangelism, his thought as a basis for a Latino social ethic, and his role as a missionary statesman and 'Two Thirds World' theologian.¹⁴ Other research was composed of comparative studies: Hispanic/Latina soteriology; evangelical perspectives on liberation themes; pneumatology and liberation; incarnation and the reign of God; and evangelisation from a liberation perspective.¹⁵ The present thesis is different in that it argues that Costas's writings present a Third World evangelical missiology.

Limitations

The thesis's research and findings will be limited to published primary and secondary material and does not include Costas's unpublished writings or interviews with people who were associated with Costas. The more prominent themes in Costas's missiological

¹³ Antonio Carlos Barro, "Orlando Enrique Costas: Mission Theologian on the Way and at the Crossroads" (PhD thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary / School of World Mission, 1993).

¹⁴ Priscilla Pope-Levison, "Comprehensive and Contextual: The Evangelism of Orlando Costas," *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 4 (1988-89); David Traverzo Galarza "Emergence of a Latino Radical Social Ethic in the Work and Thought of Orlando E. Costas: An Ethico-Theological Discourse from the Underside of History" (PhD thesis, Drew University, 1992); Allen Yeh, "Se hace camino al andar: Periphery and Center in the Missiology of Orlando E. Costas," (D.Phil diss., Oxford University, 2008).

¹⁵ Terrell Frank Coy, "Incarnation and the Kingdom of God: The Political Theologies of Orlando Costas, C. René Padilla, and Samuel Escobar" (PhD thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1999); Sharon Elizabeth Heaney, "Contextual Theology for Latin America: Liberation Themes in Evangelical Perspective (Orlando E. Costas, Samuel Escobar, J. Andrew Kirk, Emilio A. Nuñez, C. René Padilla)" [PhD thesis, Queen's University of Belfast (United Kingdom), 2004]; Loida I. Martell-Otero, "Liberating News: An Emerging United States Hispanic / Latina Soteriology of the Crossroads (Virgilio P. Elizondo, Orlando E. Costas)" (PhD thesis, Fordham University, 2005); Mark R. McClellan, "Pneumatology and Liberation in Latin America: An Analysis of the Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Theologies of Orlando E. Costas and José Comblin" (PhD thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000); Priscilla Pope-Levison, *Evangelization from a Liberation Perspective* (New York: P. Lang, 1991).

thought are not developed in depth in this thesis, but are brought into the thesis to the extent needed to understand better the points Costas makes in his writings.

Structure of this thesis

Chapter one The autobiographical aspect is prominent in Costas's missiological writings. He referred to a theological itinerary that shaped his missiological journey. There are four significant themes that emerge from his autobiographical writings: four key conversions in his life; his evangelical heritage and identity; his vocation as a missiologist; and the theme of the periphery that is the organising theme of his writings. The hymn 'Amazing Grace!' is strong in his early autobiographical writings, but gradually fades.

Chapter two Costas became increasingly conscious of his identity and cultural inheritance as a Puerto Rican and Latin American. He also recognised that he was involved in a process of several conversions. Costas's conversion to Christ led to a cultural conversion, which led to a conversion to political involvement, and then to a conversion to the poor and the oppressed. He committed himself to those who dwelt in the periphery of the world: the poor, the marginalized, and the powerless. In this chapter, Psalm 106 is introduced as the main interlocutor of this thesis. The energy and spirit of the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song expressed Costas's own passion and vision.

Chapter three Costas was disturbed by the brutal oppression and injustice he saw in Latin America. As a missiologist, he summoned the Latin American Protestant Church to engage with a continent in a revolutionary situation by becoming a catalyst for revolution. But as he assessed the various churches, he recognised that they evaded missionary engagement and would not engage with the poor and oppressed. He envisioned the Church going outside the gate to where Christ stood in solidarity with the people of the periphery. Psalm 106 is again used as an interlocutor. The Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song struck a chord in Costas and he became increasingly critical of the evangelical churches that gathered under the banner of 'Amazing Grace!'

Chapter four In Latin American liberation theology (LT), Costas did find Christians who were committed to engagement with a continent in a revolutionary situation. He surveyed key liberation theologians, made some general observations of LT, and interacted with key theological concepts of LT. Costas also recognised LT's challenges to evangelicals, yet expressed his concerns about the theology. As an evangelical, he was reluctant to give his full approval to LT. The Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song and 'Amazing Grace!' were in tension with one another in the formulation of Costas's missiology.

Chapter five The influence of *la pastoral*, a Latin American evangelical pastoral theology, provided a pastoral shape to Costas's missiology. *La pastoral* challenged the Church and her mission to be involved in every area of human life. The chapter examines Costas's writings that surveyed Latin American Roman Catholic and Protestant pastoral theologies and then expressed a unique Latin American evangelical pastoral theology. *La pastoral* was a way for the Latin American evangelical Church to engage with a continent in a revolutionary situation. It sought to establish a new society of peace, justice, and love that was envisioned in the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song.

Chapter six Costas envisioned that the mission of the Church would engage with the socio-economic and political issues of the world. Costas was critical of the Church Growth Movement and the Conservative Evangelicals who were critical and suspicious of the missiological agenda of the World Council of Churches. He was especially concerned about the prioritisation of evangelism and the loss of priority of social action in the Church's mission. At Lausanne '74, Costas and other Radical Evangelicals called for evangelicals to engage with the life and death issues of the Third World. As a Radical Evangelical, he later addressed the issues of the Lordship of Christ and the authority of Scripture from a Third World perspective.

Chapter seven This chapter surveys select evangelical congresses, consultations, and conferences—some of which Costas participated in—that convened between 1966 and 1989 in order to address the relationship between evangelism and social concern in the mission of the Church. This was a significant issue to Costas and his evangelical colleagues during the 1970s and 1980s.

In *chapter eight* I contend that the theology of contextual evangelisation that is presented in Costas's posthumously published *Liberating News* is a Third World evangelical missiology. His theology of contextual evangelisation expressed his passion for evangelisation that is pastorally and contextually shaped, that recognises the people of the periphery as the first addressees of the gospel, that is carried out in relation to the mission of the Triune God, and that exhibits four key marks of evangelicalism.

Chapter nine Costas's view of the work of Christ on the cross is compared to the views of John Driver, P.T. Forsyth, J.I. Packer, and John Stott. His view of the atonement is considered and evaluated from the perspectives of the Subjective View of the cross, the Objective View, and the view of penal substitutionary atonement

Conclusions The final case is made that Costas's writings, specifically *Liberating News*, express a Third World evangelical missiology. An assessment is offered regarding its critical issues and its contributions to contemporary evangelical missiology.

The thesis now moves to the first chapter on the theological itinerary of Orlando E. Costas.

CHAPTER ONE

A Theological Itinerary

The autobiographical aspect is clearly evident, and in some cases prominent, in the writings of Orlando E. Costas.¹ He identified a *theological itinerary* of his life that shaped his missiological reflection.² A careful survey of his literary output leads me to infer that Costas was aware that his missiology was forged by the contours of his life journey.³

This chapter provides a brief biographical sketch of Costas's theological journey based on selected autobiographical portions from his writings. Two autobiographical texts provide the primary content and structure of this chapter.⁴ Other texts reveal that Costas often wove autobiographical elements into his missiological arguments.⁵ Four prominent themes emerge from these writings: his identification of four key conversions in his life; his recognition of his place within the evangelical tradition in which he was nurtured; his sense of identity as a missiologist; and his commitment to stand with people on the periphery of human society.

¹ Of the Costas corpus there are at least 45 books, articles, interviews, and sermons that contained some autobiographical aspect.

² 'Theological itinerary' is taken from the translation of part of the title of one of Costas's autobiographical articles: Orlando E. Costas, 'Mi itinerario teológico,' *Misión* 7:1 (1988): 6-16.

³ A *missiologist* intentionally and theologically reflects on the Church's engagement with the world so that the Church's mission to the world is more efficacious.

⁴ Orlando E. Costas, 'Teólogo en la encrucijada,' in *Hacia una Teología Evangélica Latinoamericana*, ed. Padilla (San José: Editorial Caribe, 1984); idem, 'Missiology: From the Underside of History, interview by Dannette G Costas,' (Newton Center, MA: Manuscript from taped interview, 1985). The former is the point of reference for this chapter and was later reprinted under a different title as: 'Mi Itinerario,' 6-16. Variations of this autobiographical account are found in the following texts in English: Costas, 'Missiology: Underside,' *passim*; 'Conversion as a Complex Experience: A Hispanic Case Study,' *Occasional Essays* 5:1 (1978): 23-31; 'Conversion as a Complex Experience: A Personal Case Study,' in *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, ed. Coote and Stott (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1980): 174-81.

⁵ Orlando E. Costas, *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1974): *passim*; *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology at the Crossroads in Mainline Protestantism, 1969-1974* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi NV, 1976): *passim*; *Compromiso y Misión: Una reflexión sobre la misión de la iglesia en este mundo de incertidumbre en que vivimos* (San José, Costa Rica: Editorial Caribe, 1979): *passim*; 'In This Issue,' *Occasional Essays* 6 (1979): 1-3; *The Integrity of Mission: The Inner Life and Outreach of the Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979): *passim*; 'Ecumenical Experiences of an Hispanic Baptist,' *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 17 (1980): 118-19; *Comunicación por Medio de la Predicación* (Miami, FL: Editorial Caribe, 1982): 9-18; *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982): *passim*; 'The Seminary as Catalyst for Mission,' *The Judson Bulletin*, Special Issue (1984): 6-9; which was later reprinted as: 'The Seminary as Catalyst for Mission,' *Latin American Pastoral Issues* 16 (1989): 55-8; 'Roadrunner Meets Dr. Costas,' *Roadrunner* (1984): 1-2; 'Forward in Partnership,' *Latin American Pastoral Issues* 16 (1989): 65-9.

Amazing Grace! Costas's Conversion to Christ

Costas was born on the 15 June 1942 in Ponce, Puerto Rico.⁶ Before birth he was dedicated to God's service by his mother, baptized when he was forty days old, raised in a home of high moral values by his parents, and nurtured in the Methodist church his family attended.⁷ When he was 12 years old his family joined the mass migration from Puerto Rico to the US mainland.⁸ As a result of the stress of this displacement the young Costas developed 'a sense of inferiority, shame, and self-hatred.'⁹

The Costas family became involved in a Hispanic mission in their neighbourhood in Bridgeport, Connecticut.¹⁰ But the young Costas rebelled against the faith of his family and resisted his parents' efforts to change his attitudes and behaviour.¹¹ This situation changed, however, when he attended a Billy Graham Crusade in New York City in 1957.¹² As the audience sang an invitational hymn the teenager felt that something 'strange' and 'marvellous' was taking place in his life.¹³ Years later Costas regarded his conversion experience to be 'not only the beginning of a long spiritual pilgrimage, but also of my theological itinerary.' He interpreted this encounter with Christ as preparation for his later conversions to Latin American culture and socio-political engagement.¹⁴

In order to protect his new faith Costas was enrolled in 1958 for high school education at Bob Jones Academy, part of a fundamentalist institution then in confrontation

⁶ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 13.

⁷ Baptists and most Pentecostals baptized adult believers only. The more historic Protestant churches, such as Methodists, Presbyterians, and Anglicans, baptized infants.

⁸ Puerto Rico is a self-governing commonwealth associated with the USA. Even though it is not a state, Puerto Ricans have free access to the US mainland.

⁹ Ibid., 13-14. The young Costas coped with this by first engaging in aggressive social behaviour, and then becoming involved in performance singing, basketball, and leadership.

¹⁰ The mission church was started by a Spanish Baptist church, met in a Presbyterian church, was run by the local council of churches, and attracted people from a variety of Protestant denominations. Those attending the church 'met one another in the search for solutions to our economic problems and in the struggle for cultural survival' (Costas, 'Ecumenical,' 118-19).

¹¹ Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 24-5. Costas mocked his mother while she prayed, ignored his father, bullied his four sisters, and came and went as he pleased.

¹² Ibid., 25-6. Billy Graham is perhaps the most prominent evangelist of the last half of the 20th century. Costas was invited by friends to attend a 'Crusade,' a large public event at which Graham presented an evangelistic sermon and an invitation to believe in Jesus Christ.

¹³ My translation of: Costas, 'Teólogo,' 15. The hymn that Costas heard was 'Just As I Am,' an invitational hymn that was frequently sung at evangelistic services to encourage persons to accept Christ as saviour. Costas wrote: 'there was a new beginning; something unique did happen on June 8, 1958 in Madison Square Garden, and has been happening ever since' (Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 25). He immediately told his mother about his conversion and his desire to live a new life. From then on he respected his parents' religious practices, prayed, read the Bible, treated his sisters with respect, behaved himself, and acted responsibly within his family (ibid., 26). The Triune God had personally come to him and transformed his life (Costas, 'Teólogo,' 16).

¹⁴ For Costas's discussion of the relationship of these three conversions with one another, see: Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 25-30).

with other established Christian traditions.¹⁵ Soon Costas developed a fundamentalist posture and opposed any religious group that did not affirm the fundamentals. He took an anti-ecumenical stance against Roman Catholics, evangelical Protestants, liberal Protestants, and the World Council of Churches.¹⁶

Conversion to Latin American Culture

At Bob Jones Academy the weight of US Bible Belt fundamentalism and White Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture bore heavily upon Costas.¹⁷ He identified five areas of conflict he experienced with the dominant culture: the Anglo-American religious inheritance, the revivalist ethos, puritanical values, the defence of racism, and belief the USA was destined for greatness.¹⁸ The tension led to his second conversion, a conversion to culture.¹⁹ He felt increasingly alienated by classmates who came from this dominant culture, but developed a kinship with the few Latin American classmates. He later wrote that this 'not only awakened in me a passionate love for the lands south of the Rio Bravo, but also was the beachhead for the rediscovery of my hidden Latin American identity.'²⁰

After leaving Bob Jones Academy Costas took ministerial opportunities while pursuing further theological and biblical education. Costas served in a small Spanish-speaking storefront church in Bridgeport, his hometown.²¹ Later, in the early 1960s, he served as student minister in a Spanish-speaking congregation while he pursued more formal theological studies.²² Not only had Costas discovered his Latin American identity at the Academy, but he had also 'developed a profound preoccupation for the communication

¹⁵ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 17-8. The Academy, located in Greenville, SC, was connected to Bob Jones University, a key institution in US fundamentalism. His pastor recommended the school in order to protect the young Costas's faith and provide him with resources for Christian growth (Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 26). Some of fundamentalism's essential doctrines were: the inerrancy of Scripture, the Virgin birth, the Christ's atoning death, the Resurrection, and Christ's Second Coming. Fundamentalists separated themselves from people who did not affirm these essentials. Neo-evangelicals affirmed the fundamentals, but worked cooperatively with non-fundamentalist churches. The Billy Graham Association was viewed with suspicion because it worked with Roman Catholics and liberal Protestants (ibid., 27).

¹⁶ Costas, 'Ecumenical,' 119.

¹⁷ Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 26-9.

¹⁸ Ibid., 27.

¹⁹ Ibid., 29.

²⁰ My translation of Costas, 'Teólogo,' 18.

²¹ The tiny storefront congregation was connected with the Disciples of Christ, an historic US Protestant denomination. It has been common practice in the USA for ethnic and immigrant churches to hold religious services in rented commercial space until they were able to acquire a church building. Costas was 19 and had not received formal ministerial training. He was associated with a church tradition that expected a man (in most cases women were not allowed) to begin preaching before having acquired ministry credentials (Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 1).

²² While he was serving the Iglesia Latina Libre de Brooklyn (Brooklyn Evangelical Free Church) as a student minister Costas was also expected to be pursuing formal theological education at Nyack Missionary College, just north of New York City. At the church he met Rosie Feliciano, his future wife, and at the school he developed a vision for world missions and a love for preaching (Costas, 'Teólogo,' 19).

of the gospel to those who were found outside the faith.²³ This inspired him to form an evangelistic team that travelled to New York City on weekends to conduct evangelistic services among Spanish-speaking people.²⁴

Costas ministered at a Baptist church in Puerto Rico and studied Latin American history and politics at a nearby campus of the University of Puerto Rico.²⁵ He became critically aware of US cultural imperialism and increasingly conscious of his Puerto Rican identity and Latin American cultural inheritance. Later he wrote that he experienced an 'authentic cultural conversion' that enabled him to perceive Jesus Christ, the Church, and mission from the perspective of his identity as a Puerto Rican and Latin American.²⁶

After finishing his university studies he returned to the USA and enrolled in graduate theological studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS).²⁷ When the programme was not what he had expected he transferred to Garrett Theological Seminary (GTS).²⁸ At the same time Costas pursued a second graduate degree in theology at Winona Lake School of Theology (WLST) during the summers.²⁹ In order to support his family he ministered at a Spanish-speaking church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he gained experience as an urban pastor and community organizer.³⁰

While immersed in the urban context of Milwaukee, Costas critically reflected on his ministry in particular and the Church's mission in general.³¹ He realized 'that the Christian mission not only had personal, spiritual and cultural aspects, but also social, economic and political aspects as well.'³² He identified the poor and oppressed as the 'the

²³ My translation of *ibid.*, 18.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 19-20. Costas's talent for singing and love of preaching would have been put to use in these services to invite people to faith in Jesus Christ.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20. When Costas went to the Primera Iglesia Bautista in Yauco, a small city located in southeast Puerto Rico, he was married with one daughter.

²⁶ My translation of *ibid.*, 21. For more on this conversion, see: Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 26-9.

²⁷ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 21. TEDS, located in Deerfield, Illinois, drew students who wanted to read divinity in a conservative evangelical environment rather than at divinity schools associated with the historic mainline denominations.

²⁸ Costas wrote that courses in biblical languages and apologetics at TEDS did not help him minister to urban Spanish-speaking people. He read more sociologically oriented subjects at GTS, 'a more liberal seminary,' but again found that these studies were not helpful in his particular context. He worked out on his own a way to make what he read contextually relevant (Costas, *ChristOG*, 168-69).

²⁹ At WLST, Costas's masters degree thesis on 17th century Baptist ecclesiology focused on baptism and the nature of the church. It helped him work through an issue he faced at the Milwaukee congregation: how Christians holding different views of baptism could come together as members of the same congregation (Costas, 'Ecumenical,' 120).

³⁰ Costas's ministry at the Iglesia Evangélica Bautista de Milwaukee shaped his views concerning local congregational involvement with their communities (Costas, 'Teólogo,' 21-2). As a community organizer, he helped start several community organizations, and as a minister he mobilized the congregation to reach out to the community by means of housing and health care projects (Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 3).

³¹ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 22.

³² Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 30.

fundamental reference point of the Gospel.’³³ Thus Costas began to reflect seriously on the ways and means of the Church’s engagement with the world.

Socio-political Conversion

While pastoring the Milwaukee church and organizing social programmes in the community, Costas experienced his third conversion, a conversion that was a conversion to ‘the world of the forgotten and exploited’ and thus socio-political in nature.³⁴ He began to mobilize the people of his congregation to participate in liberating and integral mission in their neighbourhood.

In his first book, *La Iglesia y Su Misión Evangelizadora*, Costas called for integrity to characterise every aspect of the Church’s mission and evangelism.³⁵ Elsewhere he wrote that the book was ‘where I began to rehearse an integral concept of mission and evangelism on the basis of my action-reflection experience in Milwaukee.’³⁶ A key task of every minister was to prepare the people to carry out the Church’s mission to the community. God called the Church to mission, not self-preservation.

This socio-political conversion was the third of four critical conversions that Costas identified in his life.³⁷ Christian conversion is not a one-time occurrence, but, after an initial conversion, ‘a plunge into an ongoing adventure’ and ‘a journey into the mystery of the kingdom of God, which leads from one experience to another.’³⁸ The implication is that once a person is initially converted, he or she ‘is confronted with ever new decisions, ever new turning points, ever new fulfilments and ever new promises, and this will continue until the ultimate fulfilment of the kingdom.’³⁹ The reason for Costas’s multiple conversions was that he perceived conversions as dynamic and complex experiences brought on by the God who is engaged with women and men in history.

Costas’s conversion to Christ at the Billy Graham Crusade was his initial conversion. That conversion initiated and set the stage for a process of at least three other conversions in Costas’s life. He continually experienced new situations in his life that required important decisions to be made. Some of these required Costas to take a new direction in his life. Such was the case with his conversion to culture and to the world. As will soon be

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Orlando E. Costas, *La Iglesia y Su Misión Evangelizadora* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1971). Costas identified this book on ‘the Church and her evangelizing mission’ (the title translated) as ‘the beginning of my theological research and writing ministry’ (Costas, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 3).

³⁶ Costas, ‘ConversionHCS,’ 30.

³⁷ For Costas’s theological analysis of conversion, see: *ibid.*, 31-8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 31, 33-35.

seen, it will mean a significant decision to leave the Latin American periphery and return to the centre, the USA.

Mission in Latin American Contexts

In 1970 Costas moved his family from Milwaukee to San José, Costa Rica, where he served as a missionary with Latin American Mission (LAM).⁴⁰ He worked with the Instituto de Evangelización a Fondo (INDEF) and the Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano (SBLA).⁴¹ LAM's recent efforts to accept Latin Americans on an equal basis as North Americans for staff had impressed him. LAM had just begun to reorganize and 'latinize' itself and, as part of the process, both Latin American and North American staff were reflecting critically on such topics as evangelism and theological education.⁴² The mission was transformed into 'an evangelical variant of the Latin American theological ferment of the decade.'⁴³

As a result of his third conversion experience in Milwaukee Costas was prepared to do theology and mission in the Latin American context. When he arrived in Costa Rica he 'was already emotionally and theologically set for the new discourse, that is, the new theological trend that was emerging in Latin America, which was a critical and systematic reflection on the Christian faith from the perspective of the poor, the powerless and the oppressed.'⁴⁴

Costas became involved with the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana (FTLA), linking his theological itinerary with the 'itinerary' of the Fraternity.⁴⁵ In 1972 Costas

⁴⁰ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 24. Elsewhere Costas described LAM as a 'progressive, nondenominational, evangelical society with headquarters in Bogota, New Jersey' (Costas, *ChristOG*, iii). In 1970, the year Costas arrived in Costa Rica, LAM reorganized itself as the Comunidad Latinoamericana de Ministerios Evangélicos (CLAME) (The Latin American Community of Evangelical Ministries).

⁴¹ Costas served as Secretary of Theological Studies for INDEF (The Institute of Evangelism in Depth) and as professor of missiology and communication at SBLA (the Latin American Biblical Seminary). When SBLA became an autonomous theological faculty standing on its own and no longer under the auspices of CLAME in 1970, Costas was appointed its first dean at age 28 (Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 2).

⁴² An example of what LAM envisioned by the reorganization, see: John Kenyon, 'Latin American Mission,' *Latin American Evangelist* (1974): 2-5, 8.

⁴³ My translation of Costas, 'Teólogo,' 24.

⁴⁴ Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 5. Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s Costas entered into dialogue with Latin American liberation theology (LT). Costas's survey of LT is examined and critiqued in chapter four of this thesis.

⁴⁵ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 25. FTLA (Latin American Theological Fraternity) was 'an association composed of evangelicals who committed themselves to the Latin American evangelical community's life and mission. FTLA's objectives were: to promote reflection concerning the gospel and its significance for Latin America and all other humans; to construct a platform for dialogue among thinkers who confess Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and who are disposed to reflect on communicating the gospel in the midst of Latin American cultures and in light of the Bible; [and] to contribute to the life and mission of the Latin American evangelical churches without pretending to speak in their name nor assuming the role of spokesperson in the Latin American continent' (My translation of: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, '¿Qué es la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana?' *Misión* 4:1 (1985): 34. The periodicals *Boletín Teológico* and

was appointed as the first academic dean of SBLA, a seminary in a continent experiencing considerable internal conflict.⁴⁶ This tension was reflected among three groups taking different positions regarding Latin American liberation theology (LT).⁴⁷ Costas identified one group that endorsed LT and a second group that opposed it, but aligned himself with a third group that favoured positive interaction with LT. However, Costas soon resigned from his academic responsibilities when the situation became tense.⁴⁸ He grieved the loss of a significant community in his life:

[I]n the first months I felt theologically orphaned, without a theological community with which to maintain dialogue as rich as what we had as a staff during the first years of the decade of the '70s. The dream that we had of making the Biblical Seminary an evangelical institution, committed to the Latin American context and independent of the US centres of missionary power that had been frustrating (at least for me).⁴⁹

Costas's third conversion experience in Milwaukee and his involvement with FTLA and SBLA were points on his theological itinerary that reflected the significant process in which he was engaged. Costas no longer looked at history from the perspective of the rich and advantaged. He now read history from the perspective of the people who 'didn't really count,' who inhabited 'the underside of history,' and who existed on 'the periphery of life.'⁵⁰ From this vantage point he shaped a missiology that was contextual and comprehensive.⁵¹ The first literary expression of this new perspective had been in 1970 when Costas edited a collection of essays that he and various SBLA colleagues had written and later published as *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización*.⁵² The essays examined theological, biblical, and historical aspects of evangelization in Latin American contexts.

Misión were two means of communicating the reflection and debate of the FTLA. For more background of *Misión*, see: C. René Padilla, 'El nacimiento de una revista,' *Misión* 1:1 (1982): 5-6. For a critical examination of the different missiological perspectives of the FTLA, see: A. Christopher Smith, 'The Essentials of Missiology from the Perspective of the "Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana."' (PhD thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983). For Padilla's response to the dissertation and insights into the FTLA, see: C. René Padilla, 'La Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana: Una evaluación crítica,' *Misión* 2:4 (1983): 28-30.

⁴⁶ Costas, *Teólogo*, 29. Costas described SBLA as being in its 'golden age,' and as one of the leading Latin American Protestant seminaries.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁸ My translation of *ibid.*, 31. Costas's move was 'extremely painful' for him. He did not depart for theological reasons, but because of administrative and personal differences, especially with the seminary directors.

⁴⁹ My translation of *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Costas, 'Missiology Underside,' 5-6.

⁵¹ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 25.

⁵² Orlando E Costas, ed., *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1973). The title is translated as: Toward a Theology of Evangelization.

The Church and Its Mission

In his missiological writing and teaching in the early 1970s, Costas reflected on the life, ministry, and mission of the local congregation.⁵³ He joined with various colleagues from SBLA and FTLA in critiquing the North American missionary establishment, especially the Church Growth Movement (CGM).⁵⁴ From this emerged Costas's first book in English, articulating a Third World critique of the Church and her mission.⁵⁵ It was his first attempt to engage with the Western missionary movement in general, and the North American expression of the CGM in particular.⁵⁶ Costas intended the book 'to be a challenge for wholeness in missionary theory and practice' and 'to call the attention of the church in the North Atlantic to the unity of the gospel and to the undichotomous character of the church's role as an instrument of God's mission.'⁵⁷ Costas expressed his vision for a global and comprehensive mission.

In the introduction Costas described himself as:

a Latin American evangelical churchman who lived and studied for many years in North America, who served for the last four years as a professor of missiology in a Latin American seminary and who is presently a member of the staff of an indigenous evangelistic organization.⁵⁸

Costas also presented his evangelical credentials: as a teenager he 'had met Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,' sensed a calling to Christian ministry, pastored several 'Latin American' congregations, and discerned God's leading to minister in Latin America.⁵⁹

An Evangelical Orientation

Costas's evangelical orientation was apparent in *The Church and Its Mission*. Evangelicals around the world shared common characteristics, but also expressed diversity in thought and deed. Missionary intent was identified as the primary characteristic of evangelical theology.⁶⁰ All forms of evangelicalism had a 'burning passion for the communi-

⁵³ Costas conducted courses, organized conferences, and prepared journal articles on a wide variety of topics relating to the life and mission of the local congregation (Costas, 'Teólogo,' 26). His commitment and passion for preaching is reflected throughout his *Comunicación por Medio de la Predicación*. The title is translated as: Communication Through Preaching.

⁵⁴ At SBLA Costas's closest colleagues were Rubén Lores and Plutarco Bonilla. Some of his more prominent FTLA associates were Samuel Escobar, Peter Savage, Emilio Antonio Nuñez,, Jorge A. León, Andrew Kirk, and C. René Padilla.

⁵⁵ Costas, *ChurchIM*. The book was based on a series of lectures on the Church's mission presented at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, a non-denominational evangelical seminary in the USA.

⁵⁶ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 27.

⁵⁷ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 10.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 11-12.

⁶⁰ Orlando E. Costas, 'Evangelical Theology in the Two Thirds World,' *Evangelical Review of Theology* 11 (1987): 66.

cation of the Gospel, especially in those areas where it has not yet been proclaimed.’ Costas gave the example of the evangelical ‘awakening’ of the 18th century Methodist movement that animated Britain’s world mission thrust in the following centuries.

Costas also identified four key theological themes at the core of evangelicalism.⁶¹ The first two, the authority of Scripture and salvation by grace through faith, came from the Protestant Reformation. The last two, that the Christian life commenced with conversion and was to be expressed through renewed piety and morality, arose from the Pietist Movement and the Evangelical Awakening.⁶² Furthermore both American Revivalism and the Holiness Movement contributed to the formation of evangelicalism.⁶³ Costas was aware that evangelicals from the confessional Protestant families in Europe tended to stress the first two characteristics whereas those who leaned towards Pietism focused on the last two marks. He perceived the same thing happening in North America.

Costas was nurtured spiritually in the evangelical environment and stayed in close contact with it for the rest of his life. His evangelical orientation is seen in his *The Church and Its Mission*, especially in his statement about his two objectives in writing the book.⁶⁴ First, he sought ‘to provide a personal, evangelical, Latin American, holistic interpretation’ of the Church’s mission. It would be examined in light of Scripture, recent research regarding how churches grew, and critical issues that the Church faced in the 1970s. Second, he wanted to ‘challenge North Atlantic Christians in general and evangelicals in particular to take a ‘more integral and committed approach’ to mission.

⁶¹ Ibid. The historian D.W. Bebbington identified ‘four qualities that have been the special marks of evangelical religion: *conversionism*, a belief that lives need to be changed; *activism*, the expression of the gospel in effect; *biblicism*, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called *crucicentrism*, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross’ Bebbington used the term *crucicentrism* in the place of Costas’s ‘salvation by grace through faith,’ and employed *activism* in the place of Costas’s the new life through piety and moral discipline [D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London : Routledge, 1989): 2-17].

⁶² For general information on Pietism, see: Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979): 273-79; Paul E Pierson, ‘Pietism,’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

It is not clear what Costas meant by *Evangelical Awakening*, but he could be referring to a series of religious movements in North America and Western Europe that began around 1725, and continued well into the late nineteenth century. Some scholars suggest that there were two Great Awakenings, the first occurred between *ca.* 1735 and 1743, and the second between 1795 and 1830. Both stressed preaching, conversion, assurance of salvation, Christian lifestyle, and missionary activity. For an overview of missions that arose from the First and Second Great Awakenings, see: Paul E Pierson, ‘Great Awakenings,’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

⁶³ For more on revival and missions, see: Timothy K Beougher, ‘Revival, Revivals,’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

The Holiness Movement originated in the USA in the mid-nineteenth century and sought to promote John Wesley’s teachings on total sanctification and Christian perfection. For further information, see: R.V. Pierard, ‘Holiness Movement, American,’ in *EDT*, ed. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984).

⁶⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 16-17.

Missiology: Theology of the Crossroads

In 1974 Costas moved his family to Europe for two years while he undertook to construct a contextual and integral missiology.⁶⁵ During his first year at the Free University of Amsterdam, Johnnes Verkuyl supervised Costas's doctoral research on the mission of the various historic Latin American Protestant churches from 1969 to 1974. The project was based on personal reflection on his missionary experience and interests. It was not merely an academic exercise, but arose out of 'the heat and sweat of my labor as an Evangelical, Mainline-Protestant (Baptist and Congregational missionary) from the Hispanic Caribbean, serving in the Latin American mainland with an Evangelical para-ecclesiastical organizational complex.'⁶⁶

At the Free University, Costas continued his research in missiology. Many of Costas's titles reflect his focus in missiology or some aspects of missiology such as mission, church growth, and evangelization.⁶⁷ These three aspects became key topics of his missiological reflection.⁶⁸ During the course of his brief missiological career his books reflected a sustained, focused, and careful engagement with the key missiological issues of his day.⁶⁹ This was especially seen in his doctoral research.

The clearest expression of the fundamentals of Costas's missiology was presented in the first chapter of his doctoral dissertation and later published as *Theology of the Cross-*

⁶⁵ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 27. Costas was teaching communications and preaching at SBLA and had begun doctoral studies in communication at Northwestern University when he realized he desired to research and teach in the area of missiology, not communications (Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 4). Costas's passion for preaching was expressed in his autobiographical writings and his book on preaching. But it was not evident how respected and well known he was as a preacher. Shortly after his death a collection of sermons of Hispanic preachers was dedicated to Costas as 'Preacher, Teacher, and Missiologist' (my translation of the dedication: Angel Luis Gutiérrez, ed., *Voces del Púlpito Hispano* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1989): 7). In the prologue Samuel Escobar, a colleague of Costas, recognized him not only as a passionate spokesman for Spanish-speaking North Americans evangelicals, but also 'one of the greatest Latin American preachers of our time' (My translation of: Samuel Escobar, 'Prólogo: Homenaje a un gran predicador latinoamericano,' in: *ibid.*, 11).

⁶⁶ Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, ix-x.

⁶⁷ Out of more than 155 articles, books, and interviews ascribed to Costas, at least 80 pertain directly to some aspect of missiology. His other writings express a diversity of interest in topics that perhaps touch on missiology but focus on such topics as: preaching, the Hispanic Church in the USA, revolution, conversion, culture, contextualization, pastoral theology, preaching, liberation, the Church in China, evangelical theology, and peace and justice issues.

⁶⁸ Costas, 'Missiology: Underside'; *TheologyCrossroads*, *passim*, but esp. 7-28, 325-30; 'Missiology in Contemporary Latin America,' *EFMS Bulletin* (1975). The latter was also published as: 'Missiology in Contemporary Latin America: A Survey,' *Missiology* 5:1 (1977); 'Missiology in Contemporary Latin America: A Survey,' in *Missions and Theological Education in World Perspective*, ed. Conn and Rowen (Farmington, MI: Associates of Urbanus, 1984).

⁶⁹ Costas's key books in English that expressed this missiological engagement focus were: Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*; *ChristOG*; *Integrity*; *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989).

roads.⁷⁰ Costas read that the biblical theology movement in the 1960s had rediscovered that mission was central to the life of the Church.⁷¹ In view of this, he proposed the first fundamental of missiology was that mission was ‘intrinsic to the life of the Church’ and that missiology was ‘the handmaid of mission.’ This missionary nature was at the very core of the Church’s identity and, therefore, she was called by God to dwell in the ‘cross-road’ situations of the world. Because she was a missionary Church, her task was to go out into the world and engage with it.

Costas employed *crossroads* to refer to two senses of place where the Church carried out her mission.⁷² One sense referred to the place where the Church and the world engaged with one another and the other sense dealt with theological reflection on the realities of human life in different contexts. The first sense of the term referred to wherever the Church and the world came into contact with one another. The Church was called to be wherever historical forces—such as ideologies, political / economic systems, and social / religious movements—were mixed together in human history. Because the Church’s mission led her to dwell at the crossroads of the world, she was not only called to proclaim the gospel to the world but also to listen to it. The world was not a passive receiver of the Church’s message, but a dialogue partner with the Church. At the crossroads the Church and the world encountered one another and engaged in mutual sharing with one another. Costas was interested in missiology as intentional reflection on this dialogue between the Church and the world in light of the Christian faith.⁷³

Costas also described missiology as critical reflection that took place in the midst of specific crossroads, the second sense of the term, of the daily realities, concerns, and struggles of human life.⁷⁴ This aspect of missiology was seen as critical reflection on the different and particular contexts of the Church’s engagement with the world. This view was the foundation of his doctoral thesis, *Theology of the Crossroads*. Costas aimed to think critically about how Latin American ecumenical Protestant churches conducted themselves at the various crossroads of Latin America from 1969 to 1974.

⁷⁰ Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 7-23, 325-31.

⁷¹ Ibid., 7. Costas acknowledged the work of Blauw’s *The Missionary Nature of the Church* for the drawing his attention to this assertion.

⁷² Costas’s best explanation of *crossroads* can be found in: Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 325.

⁷³ Ibid., 9-10, 325-28.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 9, 328-31.

Costas's Pastoral Vision for Latin America

After returning to Costa Rica in 1975 Costas continued to formulate a missiology that was contextual and integral. He collected together essays he had written on the direction of his missiological thinking during the first half of 1970s and published them as a single volume.⁷⁵ The essays expressed his identity as an evangelical Protestant in Latin America and reaffirmed his commitment to do mission theology within the context of Latin America.⁷⁶

As a result of an essay presented by Costas at a conference on social ethics in Quito, Ecuador, in late 1973, and just before he departed to the Netherlands for doctoral studies, Costas and several colleagues founded the Centro Evangélico Latinoamericano de Estudios Pastorales (CELEP).⁷⁷ When he returned to Costa Rica in 1976 Costas devoted his efforts to the development of CELEP. When he left in 1980 the evangelistic, biblical, evangelical, ecumenical, and pastoral vision of CELEP had been promoted throughout the continent. The Centre provided Costas with opportunities for further missiological reflection, and he referred to it as providing 'one of the most creative moments in my life and theological pilgrimage.'⁷⁸

A Prophetic Ministry in the USA

In 1976 Costas considered 'his debt' to the Hispanic community in the USA. For four years he and his wife Rose struggled to discern whether God was leading them back to the USA.⁷⁹ They realized:

I had a prophetic ministry to discharge as a representative missiologist of an ethnic minority. We saw the necessity of an interpretation of Christian mission from the periphery of the USA, that is, from the perspective of *those absent* in the North American missionary movement (the ethnic minorities: the African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans). We returned then to 'the giant of the North' (Martí) after nearly a decade of theological reflection from the Latin American periphery in order to continue our labour from the periphery of the metropolis of the hemisphere.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Orlando E. Costas, *El Protestantismo en América Latina Hoy: Ensayos del camino (1972-1974)* [San José: Publicaciones INDEF, 1975].

⁷⁶ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 28.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 29. CELEP (Latin American Evangelical Centre for Pastoral Studies) 'was designed to provide services to ministers throughout Latin America to do research in the area of pastoral theology and mission and to stimulate a reflection on mission and evangelism from the grassroots among the Protestant communities of Latin America' (Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 4). The part that CELEP played in Costas's theological itinerary is discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

⁷⁸ My translation of Costas, 'Teólogo,' 29.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 32-4.

⁸⁰ My translation of *ibid.*, 32. The words in italics are in the source.

Costas was appointed chair of missiology and director of the Hispanic Studies and Ministries programme at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.⁸¹ A third of the seminary's student body came from Hispanic, African American, and other minority communities. The school had become known as a centre for theological reflection done from within a multi-cultural urban context. Costas committed himself to reflect theologically from the periphery of Spanish-speaking peoples. The fruit of this commitment was his 1982 book, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom*, a book conceived to be 'a critical interpretation of Christian mission from the double perspective of the dispossessed and oppressed in the Americas and the absentees and marginalized of the modern missionary movement.'⁸² The Latin American chapter of his life had ended and one about ministry in the USA was beginning. He hoped the book would inform North American Christians what Latin Americans had shared with him.⁸³

Costas wrote that his *theological itinerary* was the history of his *spiritual pilgrimage*.⁸⁴ He encountered the intersection of these two journeys as he lived in solidarity with Latin Americans and Spanish-speaking people in the USA who experienced the marginalisation of living on the periphery of life. Costas also proclaimed that the gospel was primarily addressed to these marginalized people who dwelt on the periphery. Jesus identified with them by being put to death on the periphery of Jerusalem. Jesus has been found there ever since. The periphery was 'the place where my theological itinerary has brought me' and where 'I am learning to live, think, and communicate the faith in love and hope.'⁸⁵

A Fourth Conversion: Missiology from the Periphery

Costas interpreted his return to the USA as providing the context for his 'fourth conversion.'⁸⁶ He left the USA in 1970 'for the good of my own thinking' and had no desire to return. But he experienced a change of heart and concluded that 'Latin America gave me an understanding of my real mission, which was to be in North America.'⁸⁷ He moved to the centre of power, the USA, from the periphery, Latin America, and the new social lo-

⁸¹ Ibid., 33.

⁸² My translation of *ibid.*, 34.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid. Costas referred to Hebrews 13:13 at this point that Christ was crucified 'outside the gate.'

⁸⁶ Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 7.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

cation became his point of reference for his missiological reflection.⁸⁸ Living on the periphery shaped his identity: ‘as a Puerto Rican, as a minority missiologist, I represented in everything that I said and did, the perspective of the periphery.’⁸⁹ His task was to interpret Christian mission to North American Christians from the perspective of the poor and oppressed and to his own Spanish-speaking community and other minority communities in the USA.⁹⁰ His intention was to help Christians at the centre and on the periphery to comprehend that ‘the gospel above all is a message of liberation.’ Earlier Costas shared that he had not returned to North America to advance his career as a missiologist in the growing missiology market in the USA, but ‘to continue to do missiology from the periphery—this time, the periphery of the American metropolis.’⁹¹

Costas presented two reasons for offering this collection of essays published in 1982 as *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom*.⁹² First, they reflected the contextual nature of missiology. Missiology was ‘a theology of the crossroads,’ the concept he introduced in *Theology of the Crossroads* in 1976.⁹³ The essays did not make abstract theological assertions, but shared personal reflections ‘on issues that emerge out of the heat and tumble of Christian mission among the oppressed people today.’ Second, the essays expressed Costas’s social location as a person ‘who not only belongs to a marginalized community in the American metropolis and has lived and worked in an oppressed continent, but who has also situated himself theologically in the periphery of history.’ They revealed ‘the reality of rejection and marginalization of the Latin American peoples, the Hispanic community in the United States, and all oppressed women, men, and children everywhere.’ Thus missiological reflection was pursued from the perspective of those outside history. Furthermore, Costas argued that ‘missiology should always start with a note of personal engagement’ and that it also ‘must land there.’⁹⁴ Therefore the

⁸⁸ Costas used *periphery* to mean ‘the great absentees of the American missionary movement (oppressed American ethnic absentees of the American missionary movement: Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans)’ (Costas, *ChristOG*, xiii-xiv).

⁸⁹ Costas, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 7.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 8. Costas noted that ten years in Latin America and his travels to places all over the world had given him a clear identity with Third World people.

⁹¹ Costas, *ChristOG*, xii-xiv.

⁹² *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁹³ Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 9-10, 325-31. He defined the concept as ‘a critical reflection at the point where cultures, ideologies, religious traditions, and social, economic, and political systems confront each other, and where the gospel seeks to cross the frontier of unbelief’ (Costas, *ChristOG*, xiv).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

book concluded with a sermon challenging Christians to move out of the security of Christendom and come to Jesus.⁹⁵

Andover Newton Theological School

Costas's theological itinerary took a different course in 1984 when he was named Dean of Andover Newton Theological School (ANTS) and appointed to the Adoniram Judson Chair of Missiology.⁹⁶ Costas found it 'very significant' that he was the first Hispanic dean of a Protestant graduate school of theology and occupied 'one of the most prestigious chairs of missiology' in the USA. He wrote:

In one of the greatest ironies of history—to be the head of an institution that is far removed from my own cultural experience. Who would have ever thought that a kid from a little island in the eastern Caribbean, who grew up in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Southern New England, in the periphery of that city among the Hispanic community, ...who literally stayed away from the league that is represented by the Andover Newton school here in Boston, heading up the academic life, of all things, of this historic institution and being the holder of this chair?⁹⁷

Costas continued: 'my appointment reveals that it is possible to come from the periphery and yet enter the centers of the powerful organizations and to be able to do a prophetic job.'⁹⁸ He viewed himself as a 'bridge' and 'sign of hope' between the centre and the periphery, and between mainstream Christianity and the Church emerging out of the Third World. Therefore, 'I show that it is possible for someone who comes from where I come from to exercise leadership and to open new vistas and to give new leadership to an old prestigious, historic institution and to give it, thereby, renewal and new life.'⁹⁹

In his inaugural address as dean and professor at ANTS, Costas called it 'a bold and daring decision on the part of an established school to call as dean one so different in culture and background.' He sensed that God was calling him and the school to do something new and challenged ANTS to assume its role as a catalyst for mission in the last quarter of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁰ Costas revealed that as dean of school he would join with school president George Peck in the latter's efforts to help the school to recover its

⁹⁵ Ibid., 188-94. The sermon was entitled 'Outside the Gate' and was based on Jesus suffering outside the gate of Jerusalem on behalf of the people (Heb. 13:12).

⁹⁶ Andover Newton, near Boston, MA., is the oldest Protestant graduate theological school in the USA. In 1810 Judson was the first missionary to go to the foreign mission field from the USA (Costas, 'Missiology-Underside,' 8).

⁹⁷ Ibid., 8-9. The quoted section is taken from a written account of a taped audio interview.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 9.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Costas delivered the address upon his inauguration at First Baptist Church of Newton, November 14, 1984. The address was printed in full as: Costas, 'Seminary (1984),' 2-10.

‘legacy as a seedbed of world mission.’¹⁰¹ He pledged to contribute ‘a perspective of world mission and theological education from the underside of history.’¹⁰² For four years Costas and Peck enabled ANTS to pursue ‘fresh possibilities for transforming society as a multicultural inclusive educational community where ministry is grounded in God’s grace, the centrality of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.’¹⁰³

The Cuban-Nicaraguan Gospel Song

Costas referred to a Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song that meant so much to him that he and Rose his wife translated it from Spanish into English.¹⁰⁴ The full text in Spanish and English can be found on page ii of this thesis. Costas was drawn to the song because it spoke to his commitment to the struggle to construct a new order of life. It touched on the themes that were important to him: mission, calling, obedience, commitment, struggle, God’s will, suffering, and kingdom values of love, justice, and peace. Thus the song conveyed the spirit that he sought to characterise his teaching and administration at ANTS.¹⁰⁵

Liberating News

In the preface to Costas’s posthumously published book, *Liberating News*, Rose L. Feliciano Costas offered insight into the life and ministry of her late husband¹⁰⁶ She noted that ‘Orlando’s zeal to write at different stages of his missiologial development was part of his desire to share—especially with the Latin American world—the research and insights of his own journey of faith as a pastor, evangelist, and missiologist.’¹⁰⁷ She also

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 6. George Peck had served as a missionary professor of theology and head of school at Eastern Theological College, India. At ANTS he occupied the Judson chair and served as dean for nearly two decades. With Costas as dean he assumed the presidency of the school and was Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology [Andover Newton Theological School, *Andover Newton Theological School, Catalogue 1986-1988* (Newton, MA: Andover Newton Theological School, 1986), 5].

¹⁰² Costas, ‘Seminary (1984),’ 7. He wrote: ‘I represent those who have suffered from the insensitivities of the modern missionary movement and yet continue to believe in the rightness of sharing God’s message of salvation with all nations.’ The Church’s mission was called to proclaim the gospel that transforms the world and not an ideology of oppression. He also identified with those who did not have access to theological education and yet were prophets of peace and justice.

¹⁰³ Ibid. The catalogue described Costas as an internationally known missiologist and contextual theologian who, as dean, brought ‘abounding energy and expansive spirit’ to ANTS.

¹⁰⁴ The English text and Costas’s comments can be found in: Costas, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 10. Costas explained that the song was actually a Cuban gospel song that had been taught to them by Nicaraguans who themselves had had it taught to them by Cuban friends. The full text in both languages and brief comments by Costas can be found in: Costas, ‘Seminary (1984),’ 9; idem, ‘Seminary (1989),’ 60. Gabriel Fackre comments on the English text of the gospel song in his introduction to: Costas, *Liberating News*, xiii. Costas cited the English version in: *Liberating News*, 130.

¹⁰⁵ Costas, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 10.

¹⁰⁶ Rose L. Feliciano Costas in: ibid., ix-xiv. Orlando Costas died 5 November 1987.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., ix. Costas often told her: ‘One must put things in writing because time is running out.’

wrote that *Liberating News*, Costas's contribution to a contextual theology of evangelisation, was 'the driving force of the last decade of my husband's life.'¹⁰⁸ He planned three volumes in both Spanish and English as the way to promote the basis, method, and strategy of a theology of contextual evangelization.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, the working out of his theology of contextual evangelization was brought to an unfortunate end when Costas died in November 1988. However, Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation as presented in *Liberating News* will be examined in chapter seven of this thesis.

Critical Comments

The purpose of this first chapter was to give a bird's eye overview of Costas's life as a missiologist by surveying his autobiographical writings. Those writings reveal a theological itinerary, a spiritual journey. It is evident that certain places on Costas's theological itinerary shaped his missiology. The engines that drove Costas on his journey were four conversions that he identified in his autobiographical writings.

The conversions are the first of four significant themes that emerge from Costas's autobiographical writings. They are, perhaps, the key concept for understanding his theological itinerary. The other three themes arise as a result of various conversions in Costas's life. The first conversion he experienced initiated Costas into the Christian life. He later described it as being plunged into an ongoing adventure and the beginning of a journey into the mystery of the kingdom of God. Costas started his spiritual journey as a result of this first conversion to Christ.

But the first conversion also plunged Costas into the world and the tradition of North American Protestant evangelicalism. *Amazing Grace* was its anthem that was sung out so that everybody in the world could hear. This North American evangelicalism is the second significant theme that emerges from Costas's autobiographical writings. It provided the foundation upon which his theological itinerary was shaped. From that base Costas launched out into life and ministry.

Costas's first conversion was not the only one he had experienced. There were at least three other conversions in his life that would usher him through a life-long process. In his spiritual journey, Costas moved from one experience to another. He perceived that he, like any other Christian believer, was being constantly confronted by new experiences, new situations, new promises, and new decisions to make. There were dynamic

¹⁰⁸ Just before his death Costas jotted a note that revealed what was important to him: 'The practice of evangelization has been the passion of my ministerial career' (ibid.).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., x.

and complex experiences orchestrated by God that challenged him and other Christian believers to go out in new directions.

As a young student, Costas experienced his second conversion, a conversion to culture. He rejected the religion and culture of the Bible Belt in the USA and re-established his Puerto Rican and Latin American identity. Then, as a minister in Milwaukee, he experienced a socio-political conversion. In a fourth conversion, he committed himself to doing missiological reflection from the perspective of those who dwell on the periphery. Those three other conversions channelled Costas to practice missiology as critical reflection on the Church's mission, and, furthermore, shaped his missiological stance that stood in solidarity with those on the periphery of the world.

Therefore the third significant theme that emerges from Costas's autobiographical writings is that Costas's vocation was to critically assess the Church's engagement with every area of human life. He challenged the Church to confront the socio-economic and political issues of societies. The fourth significant theme is connected to the third. The Church is called by God to stand with those on the periphery—the poor, the powerless, and the oppressed. The Church's mission is evaluated from their perspective. The Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song captures the spirit of these last two themes in Costas's autobiographical material.

Chapter Conclusions

Costas's autobiographical material reveals certain aspects of the development of his missiology. First, Costas's missiology was significantly shaped by four conversions that he identified. Second, North American evangelicalism was a significant point of reference in the development of his missiology. Third, his missiology developed as the result of critical reflection on his assessment of the Church's mission to stand with those who dwell on the periphery of the world, especially those living in Latin America. *Amazing Grace!* had faded away and the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song more effectively expressed the essentials of Costas's missiology.

CHAPTER TWO

Latin America and the Third World

In 1978 Costas identified himself as ‘a Latin American from the Hispanic Caribbean.’¹ He traced his growing identity as a Latin American in several other autobiographical articles.² Costas not only experienced a conversion to Christ, but also a cultural conversion by which he acknowledged his identity as Puerto Rican and Latin American. Latin America became the reference point for Costas from which he developed his cultural identity and his vocation as a missiologist. He linked his cultural conversion with his conversion to a belief in Jesus Christ.³ This chapter looks at this linkage and how it was further refined through his commitment to the poor and oppressed, the periphery, the marginalized, and the Third World.

A Latin American Identity

While reading Latin American history and politics during his time in Puerto Rico, Costas rediscovered his Latin American and specifically Puerto Rican identity, growing in appreciation of his Latin American cultural inheritance, beginning to critique the political hegemony of the USA in the southern continent, and seeking to break with the dominant North American culture.⁴

¹ Orlando E. Costas, 'Conversion as a Complex Experience: A Hispanic Case Study,' *Occasional Essays* 5:1 (1978): 21-2. According to Costas Latin Americans lived in a particular geographical area, were descended from the convergence of three ethnic streams, and shared a common linguistic and Christian religious heritage. Since he was from Puerto Rico and spoke Spanish as his first language he referred to himself as a Hispanic Caribbean. Cuba and the Dominican Republic were also considered part of the Hispanic Caribbean but Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago were not.

² See Orlando E. Costas, 'Conversion as a Complex Experience: A Personal Case Study,' in *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, ed. Stott and Coote (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1980), 173; 'Teólogo en la encrucijada', in *Hacia una Teología Evangélica Latinoamericana*, ed. Padilla (San José: Editorial Caribe, (19-84), 18, 20-1; 'Missiology: From the Underside of History, Interview by Dannette G Costas,' (Newton Center, MA: Manuscript from taped interview, 1985), 5-7.

³ Costas interpreted this second conversion as having 'been stimulated and inspired by my encounter with that Jew who had transformed my existence once I acknowledged Him as God's revelation made flesh and trusted Him as my only Savior and Lord' (Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 29).

⁴ Ibid. Also see: Costas, 'Teólogo,' 20-1. Costas accepted 'joyfully' the sense of his Latin American identity and its cultural riches. He attempted to rid himself of Anglo-American cultural baggage that prevented him from receiving his Puerto Rican and Latin American inheritance.

Costas's experience as a migrant in the USA was a significant factor in his growing convictions.⁵ As a youth he had felt like 'a member of a forgotten minority,' and experienced 'the awfulness of ethnic prejudice, the harshness of poverty (in a country where the great majority have over and beyond their needs), and the oppression of an impersonal, culturally alienating education system.'⁶ He concluded, however, that his experience as a migrant in the USA was better than that of most Latin American people throughout history who had been oppressed and exploited for centuries by Spain, Portugal, England, France, The Netherlands, and, most recently, the USA.⁷ He perceived the current situation arose from the actions of a number of nations rather than just one, such as the USA. Nations exploited the oligarchies of the colonized countries for economic gain. But Costas was conscious of the 'political oppression and economic exploitation' that the USA, 'an imperial and neo-colonial power,' was wielding all over the continent in general, and in Puerto Rico, his 'own country,' in particular.⁸

The Common Historical Situation

Costas highlighted the 'common historical situation' of the various Latin American peoples.⁹ They were collectively incorporated into the historical process by the colonial and neo-colonial powers. Latin America, as a result, became characterized as an oppressed and impoverished continent. For over four centuries the majority of Latin American people were culturally, economically, socially, and politically oppressed and marginalized. Costas declared: 'It is this reality that gives the peoples of these lands a cultural homogeneity clearly distinguishable from the North Atlantic cultures present in the Americas.'

Elsewhere Costas continued to emphasise the common identity in history that Latin Americans shared.¹⁰ The common identity was formed by the Mercantile and Industrial

⁵ Orlando E. Costas, *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1974), 12.

⁶ Ibid. The expression 'the forgotten race' was borrowed from Julio Samorra, *La Raza: Forgotten Americans* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1967).

⁷ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 12-3. Costas visited the Dominican Republic at the time of the 1965-1966 US military intervention. He witnessed 'how a powerful nation quenched the hopes and aspirations of a people who have been dominated in one way or another throughout their history by oligarchies and foreign powers.' He saw the pattern repeated throughout Latin America over the years.

⁸ The process was initiated by the Spanish and French and 'successfully completed by the Northern European people, notably the British, Dutch, French and more recently the Anglo-North Americans.' The latter group formed a 'neo-colonial pact' based on the designs of the earlier colonial powers (Costas, 'ConversionHCS,' 22).

⁹ Costas, *ibid.*; 'ConversionPCS,' 174.

¹⁰ Orlando E. Costas, 'Evangelism in a Latin American Context,' *Evangelical Review of Theology* 3:1 (1979): 55.

Revolutions that initiated ‘several successive civilizational processes which condemned the people of Latin America to a history of backwardness and underdevelopment by structuring them into nuclei of exploitative production.’¹¹ *Nuclei of exploitative production* meant that Latin American peoples were ‘enslaved and integrated into the world economic system.’ This created the present day situation of dependency, backwardness, underdevelopment, and trauma of the Latin American people.¹² Costas described Latin America as ‘a continent whose history is one of economic and cultural exploitation.’¹³ Late twentieth-century Latin America was ‘the offspring of 500 year old rape by Western culture and civilization.’ This rape was started by the Spanish conquistadors; carried on by the English, Dutch, and French; and continued by North Americans.¹⁴

Revolutionary Times

In 1971 Costas submitted for publication a daring article regarding the mission of the Church in the revolutionary context of Latin America.¹⁵ The article was daring because it expressed the reflection of an evangelical missiologist seeking to understand the Church’s mission in terms of the political and socio-economic realities and the revolutionary setting of Latin America.¹⁶

¹¹ Ibid. Costas drew from: Darcy Ribeiro, *The Americas and Civilization* (New York: Dutton, 1972), 89-429. Costas used the phrase ‘nuclei of exploitative production’ in: Costas, ‘ConversionHCS,’ 22; ‘Pecado y Salvación en América Latina’ *Pastoralia* 2:4-5 (1980): 226-7; ‘La Evangelización en el Contexto de América Latina y el Caribe,’ *Pastoralia* 2:3 (1979): 9.

¹² See: Darcy Ribeiro, *The Civilizational Process* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1968).

¹³ Costas, ‘EvangelismLAC,’ 55.

¹⁴ For more on cultural, economic, historical, and political aspects of Latin America, see: José Míguez-Bonino, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 21-60; Esther Arias and Mortimer Arias, *The Cry of My People: Out of Captivity in Latin America* (New York: Friendship Press, 1980); Enrique Dussel, *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation*, trans. Neely. Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1981); Eduardo H. Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* trans. Belfrage, 25th anniversary ed. (London: Latin America Bureau, 1997); Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, trans. Inda and Eagleson. Rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 49-57; Hugo Assmann and Noam Chomsky, *Carter y la Lógica del Imperialismo*, 2 vols. (Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica: Enrique Dussel, *América Latina: Dependencia y liberación* (Buenos Aires: Fernando García Cambeiro, 1973); Núñez C. and Taylor, *Crisis in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective*, (Chicago: Moody, 1989), 51-130.

¹⁵ Orlando E. Costas, ‘Latin American Revolutions and the Church,’ *Foundations* 14 (1971): 116-27.

¹⁶ An article on revolution and the Church was not what one would expect from an evangelical of that era, but it makes sense in the case of Costas. His successive conversions to Christ, culture, and socio-political involvement set him on such a trajectory. This article also reflects that Costas was a child of the second half of the 1960s in the USA: a time of protest against the Vietnam War and US military intervention abroad and demonstrations for an end to racism, poverty, and sexual inequality. As a young man Costas breathed in the air of revolution.

In the first half of the article Costas analysed the nature of revolutions in general and those in Latin America.¹⁷ The revolutions played an essential role in the history of *Iberian America*.¹⁸ Costas portrayed Latin American post-colonial history as one of 'restlessness, turmoil, and *coups d'état*.' Even though the continent experienced revolutions, they never delivered what they had promised. Costas predicted that the conditions of Latin America made revolution 'inevitable:'

A people which for so long have lived in oppression, starvation, illiteracy, and unemployment cannot remain quiet much longer while a small percentage of wealthy land-owners, industrialists, and politicians enjoy ninety-five percent of the total production and thereby control their destinies and human rights. An area which has the most rapid population increase in the world and in which fifty percent are under nineteen years of age will not tolerate the perpetuation of semifeudalistic economic and political systems much longer.¹⁹

Costas even cited a pronouncement of a Senator that the USA could not prevent revolution from happening in Latin America because of the political, economic, military, and social conditions sown into the reality of Latin America.²⁰

A 'Christian' Continent

Costas considered religious heritage as well as the socio-economic and political aspects when he analysed the Latin America context.²¹ The Latin American people were seen as Christians, even if nominally so, and the cultures and values arose out of Christianity.²² Christianity had made its presence known and its impact felt longer than in any other Third World continent or North America.²³ Costas considered it tragic that the harsh reality of economic and cultural exploitation occurred in a continent that was described as

¹⁷ Ibid., 116-22. Costas's two texts for his analysis of Latin American revolution were: Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965); Charles W. Anderson, *Politics and Economic Change in Latin America* (Princeton, NJ: Nostrand, 1967). In the second half, pp. 122-27, he presented his views on the Church's mission in the revolutionary context of the continent. These are examined in the next chapter. There is nothing this developed on the Church and revolution anywhere else in Costas's literary corpus.

¹⁸ Costas, 'LARevolutions,' 118. Only in this article did Costas employ the terms *Iberian America* and *Latin America* interchangeably to mean the same thing. The two countries of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain and Portugal, greatly influenced the shaping of Latin America as it is today.

¹⁹ Ibid., 121.

²⁰ The Senator was the late Robert F. Kennedy.

²¹ Costas, 'EvangelismLAC,' 56-7. The same article in Spanish was published as: Costas, 'Evangelización-CALC,' 8-21.

²² Language, customs, symbols, values, institutions, and lifestyles were imported to Latin America from Christian Europe.

²³ In this context *Third World* refers to Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Christian. Elsewhere he portrayed Latin America as formed and deformed by Christianity.²⁴

Costas found it ironic that although Latin American society claimed to be religious, its injustice negated God.²⁵ Latin American dictators professed to be Christian and vowed to defend the faith, and yet they oppressed the poor with whom Jesus Christ so identified. As a major player in this system, the Christian Church was 'guilty of a traditional alliance with the dominant classes and / or external powers responsible for the perpetuation of a state of injustice, domination and institutionalized violence.'²⁶ By her neutrality the Church justified the *status quo* and separated reconciliation from the call for justice. She looked the other way when her rich members exploited the poor, but taught the poor to accept their poverty and oppression without question. For centuries the Church justified a system of marginalization and injustice, supported the rich and powerful, and hindered the poor and oppressed from seeking justice.

Costas also interpreted Latin American history along theological lines, especially by employing the concepts of sin and salvation.²⁷ Latin America was begotten in sin when the Spanish came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to conquer the inhabitants of the continent and it was further shaped in sin by the domination of the invading peoples of Europe.²⁸ Everywhere Costas looked in the continent's history he saw landlessness, unfair prices, unemployment, underemployment, marginalisation, malnourishment, homelessness, addiction, and sexual exploitation. And he attributed it all to the results of sin.²⁹

²⁴ Orlando E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1982), 35-6. For more, see: H. McKennie Goodpasture, ed., *Cross and Sword: An Eyewitness History of Christianity in Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989).

²⁵ Costas, *ChristOG*, 36. In this case Costas assessed the Latin American Church from a sociological perspective, but did not include a theological perspective. He perceived the Church as a social institution that gave support to the rich and powerful while she oppressed the poor. Her people confess words of belief in God, but their actions are oppressive, unjust, and violent. There is no indication in this text that Costas gave any indication of the possibility of the judgment of God on a corrupt, disobedient, and unfaithful Church. He rightly diagnosed that the Church broke the social contract with the poor, but had no room for the concept of God's people breaking their covenant with God. This was a harsh social critique issued by Costas, but there was no theological or prophetic word by him. It was a one-dimensional analysis that was confined to the sociological aspect of the institutional Church.

²⁶ Costas, 'EvangelismLAC,' 56. It is clear from the context that Costas used the words 'Christian church' to mean the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.

²⁷ Costas, *ChristOG*, 21-42. It appeared earlier in Spanish in: 'Pecado (*Pastoralia*),' 211-34; 'Pecado y salvación en América Latina,' in *América Latina y la Evangelización en la Década de los 80*, ed. Latin American Theological Fraternity (Cuernavaca, Mexico: FTL, 1980). Also see: Orlando E. Costas, 'Theological Education and Mission,' in *New Alternatives in Theological Education*, ed. Padilla (Oxford: Regnum Books., 1988), 19-20.

²⁸ Costas, *ChristOG*, 33-5.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 33.

Thus the Americas became the scene of one of the ‘greatest rapes recorded in human history.’³⁰

Costas argued that woven into the history of colonial Latin American was the full manifestation of human sin.³¹ Disobedience, injustice, oppression, and unbelief, all these have been evident throughout the history of the continent. Both the personal as well as the social realities of sin were evident in Costas’s theological analysis of the soul of the Latin American people. Latin American women and men in both the personal and collective sense had been corrupted by the perversity of sin.

Not only had Costas been aware of the reality of sin throughout Latin American history, he also acknowledged that salvation had been proclaimed throughout the continent.³² He wrote: ‘The irony of Latin America is that it was not only born in sin but also has been saturated with the message of salvation. The Europeans arrived with the cross as well as the sword.’³³ The manifestations of the Christian gospel were mixed in with the cries of injustice, poverty, and oppression.³⁴ Costas concluded: ‘Notwithstanding the fact that the face of Christ has been disfigured by injustice and oppression, his name is not foreign to the ears of the majority of Latin Americans.’³⁵

Even though Latin America was seen as a continent of suffering and sin, Costas saw the continent filling up with hope.³⁶ In the face of genocide, dictators, fratricide, exile, torture, hunger, poverty, addictions, prostitution, illiteracy, and other effects of human sin, he proclaimed ‘Latin America lives with hopeful expectation.’³⁷ Costas located the source of that hope in God’s grace. The fruit of this grace blossomed into hope for a continent deep in sin and misery.³⁸ God’s grace was expressed in countless ways: struggles for justice, popular music of the day, religiosity of the common people, and even in football. These expressions, however, only made ultimate sense when they were grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ.³⁹

³⁰ Ibid., 34. Costas referred to an unspecified reference to Simón Bolívar, the ‘Great Liberator’ of Latin America.

³¹ Ibid., 34-5. Costas cited Romans 3:12b to support his argument: there is no person who does not sin.

³² Ibid., 35.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Costas wrote that Latin America was unlike any other continent because it was a continent born in sin, but saturated with Christianity (ibid.).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ My translation of: Costas, ‘Pecado (*Pastoralia*)’, 229, whereas Costas, *ChristOG*, 36, reads that Latin America ‘has never lost hope.’

³⁸ Ibid. Costas was reflecting on Paul’s declaration in Rom. 5:20 that where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more.

³⁹ Ibid. It is not clear why Costas referred to Romans 5:20. Romans 5:12-21 is a contrast between Adam, whose disobedience brought sin and death into the world, and Christ, whose obedience made many

The Poor and Oppressed

Costas explained that his second conversion—identification with his people, Puerto Ricans—was opened up to include his conversion to the cause of the poor, the powerless, and the oppressed.⁴⁰ In Milwaukee he not only recognised Christ among Puerto Ricans, but especially among people who were suffering. Jesus identified himself with the poor and oppressed in such a way that he was the poor and oppressed One par excellence. Christ associated himself with ‘the little people of the world’ who suffered.⁴¹ Costas believed God had called him to leave his comfortable life and identify himself with the poor and oppressed.⁴²

Based on his experience with the poor and oppressed in Milwaukee, Costas began his missionary service in Costa Rica having experienced there what he called his ‘third missiological...or political conversion.’⁴³ He had ‘learned to read history not from the perspective of the cultured and well-to-do, but rather, from the perspective of uncultured, of the *despisers* of the world, of the people on the fringes of society.’⁴⁴ They were the victims who dwelt at the underside of history and inhabited the periphery, and, thus, were never taken seriously. From the human point of view they were invisible and worthless; but God sent Christ to die for them. Therefore, in reality, they were the ‘subjects of history.’⁴⁵

Costas saw the increasing disparity between those who had and those who had not; between those who dominated, and those who were dominated; and between those who

righteous. But at this point Costas did not follow the more traditional evangelical viewpoint that coupled grace to matters of a person’s salvation, especially in matters of personal conversion and justification. Here he wrote of divine grace that is infused into all aspects of human affairs, whether connected with the Church or not. God’s grace is at work everywhere and present in Christian and non-Christian people alike. Divine grace is submerged into the affairs of human history and therefore evident in people as well as in human events and historical projects. Even though Costas acknowledged the importance of the Church elsewhere in his writings of this time, the reader could be left wondering if the Church really had a mission that took part in God’s actions to liberate and recreate all of creation. Costas viewed grace as bringing about new creation life, but it was not connected to Christ’s obedience that made sinners righteous. He did not explain what he meant by the ultimate sense of grace being grounded in the gospel.

⁴⁰ Even though Costas affirmed Jesus was a Palestinian Jew, he declared that the Resurrected Jesus became identified with the histories of other peoples. Therefore Christ was perceived dwelling among the Puerto Rican people. See: Costas, ‘ConversionHCS,’ 29; idem, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 5.

⁴¹ When he was younger Costas had aspired to minister at a middleclass church that would attract lawyers, doctors, and other rich people. But upon arriving in Milwaukee the first people to ask him for help were the poor and oppressed people from the Hispanic community (ibid.).

⁴² Costas shared that in Milwaukee he received ‘a call of God to participate in the struggle of the poor’ and that, as a consequence, he ‘had to be converted to the cause of the poor, the powerless and the oppressed’ so that he would be ‘a faithful believer and minister of the gospel’ (ibid.).

⁴³ Ibid., 5-6.

⁴⁴ Perhaps the word *despisers* is better read as *despised*?

⁴⁵ See: Angel Luis Gutiérrez, ‘Orlando Enrique Costas: Un perfil personal,’ *Pastoralia* 10:20, 21 (1988): 102.

had more than they needed, and those who lacked the basics of life.⁴⁶ There was a ‘situation of poverty, injustice, dependence, oppression, repression and helplessness on the part of the exploited—a situation complicated by the increasing awareness of their condition and their refusal to accept it as determinative for their future.’

Costas acknowledged that the gap between the rich and the poor had been evident throughout history.⁴⁷ But it was different in the present era because people had become conscious of their situation and had been naming their oppression, poverty, injustice, and suffering.⁴⁸ Critical analysis instruments were employed to identify the underlying causes of injustice and suffering. Costas identified three causes of the present situation: ‘an unjust distribution of this world’s goods, a lack of respect for the well-being of others and a proud and self-centered worldview which is intolerant of any criticism.’ He stood in solidarity with the suffering masses’ conscious awareness of the need for, and committed determination to, the transformation of history.

After studying the scriptures for their perspectives on the poor, Costas concluded poverty was ‘a state of powerlessness.’⁴⁹ The field of meaning for *poverty* included: destitution, helplessness, impotence, weakness, suffering, and oppression. The poor person lacked the basics of life and the means to receive those basic resources. Also, Costas made a distinction between *spiritual* poverty and *material* poverty. Both terms conveyed a sense of powerlessness: the former in terms of powerlessness and helplessness in relation to God and the latter in terms of the material aspects of human life.⁵⁰

The scriptural view of material poverty thus conveyed the notion of economic and political powerlessness.⁵¹ The poor were denied access or had limited or inadequate access to the basic resources for sustaining life. The poor were described in the Bible as: weak, bent over, wretched of the earth, and victims of abuse and exploitation.⁵² The poor person had no one on his or her side except God. According to the Old Testament position, ‘poverty is a scandalous condition, an insult to a just and righteous God.’⁵³ The God

⁴⁶ Orlando E. Costas, ‘Mission Out of Affluence,’ *Missiology*, 1 (1973): 406.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 406-07.

⁴⁸ For useful books that reflect the process Costas was in, see: Leonardo Boff, *When Theology Listens to the Poor* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988); Gustavo Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History* (London: SCM, 1979). For a fresh and more recent presentation, see: Bob Ekblad, *Reading the Bible with the Damned* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005).

⁴⁹ Costas, ‘MissionOA,’ 412-13.

⁵⁰ For more on spiritual poverty, see: *ibid.*, 413-16.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 412-13.

⁵² Scriptural references did not accompany his statements about the poor.

⁵³ *Ibid.* Costas referred to the Mosaic Law and the prophets in the Old Testament and the Gospels and James in the New Testament.

of the scriptures expressed God's commitment to the poor by providing for them and condemning the rich, the unjust, and the oppressor.⁵⁴

The Periphery

Costas referred to his fourth conversion as God's call to return to the USA to do God's work there.⁵⁵ He was returning to 'the geographical center,' 'the great metropolis,' the USA. Costas described himself as a Puerto Rican, minority missiologist representing the perspective of the periphery in the US metropolis.⁵⁶ He assumed the perspective of 'the poor, the powerless and the oppressed of the earth' as well as the perspective from Latin America, Africa, and Asia.⁵⁷ He wrote from 'a very clear identity of the two thirds world, as I call it, otherwise known as the third world.'⁵⁸ He was called to interpret the perspective of the periphery to its centre, 'mainstream North America.'⁵⁹

When Costas reflected on his theological itinerary at the end of one of his autobiographical articles, he wove together the motifs of the poor and oppressed, Latin America, North America, Hispanics, and the periphery.⁶⁰ The gospel of Jesus Christ presented a privileged place to the poor, marginalized, and oppressed. Because God was at work wherever there were marginalized peoples, God was present with the people of Latin America and the Hispanic minority in the USA. Costas expressed his commitment to Jesus Christ by standing with him in solidarity with the poor, exploited, and oppressed, the people on the periphery of life.

⁵⁴ For a more on Costas's developed position on the poor in scripture, see: Orlando E. Costas, 'The Gospel and the Poor,' in *Evangelism and the Poor: A Third World Study Guide*. Rev. ed. Samuel and Sugden (Bangalore, India: Partnership in Mission-Asia., 1983), 81-3. For other positions on the poor from various scriptural and theological perspectives, see: Gustavo Gutiérrez, 'Option for the Poor,' in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ellacuría and Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), 235-50; idem, *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984), ch. 9; Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Evangelism Poor*; idem, *Sharing Jesus in the Two Thirds World: Evangelical Christologies from the Contexts of Poverty, Powerlessness and Religious Pluralism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1983); Ronald Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1977); Elsa Tamez, *Bible of the Oppressed* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1982); Thomas D. Hanks, *Opresión, Pobreza, y Liberación: Reflexiones bíblicas* (Miami: Editorial Caribe, 1982); idem, *God So Loved the Third World: The Biblical Vocabulary of Oppression*, trans. James (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983); Victorio Araya, *El Dios de los Pobres* (San José, Costa Rica: DEI Sebila, 1984); Richard Batey, *Jesus and the Poor* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).

⁵⁵ Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 7. Also see: A. L. Gutiérrez, 'OECostasPerfil,' 102.

⁵⁶ Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 7-8.

⁵⁷ Costas based his ability to speak from the perspective of the periphery on ten years of ministry in Latin America and numerous trips in Africa and Asia.

⁵⁸ The concept of the *Third World* is discussed at the end of this chapter.

⁵⁹ Based on my reading of other texts by Costas, I sense that his interpreting the issues of the periphery to the centre was not confined to issues of faith, but included issues of global economic and political significance.

⁶⁰ Costas, 'Teólogo,' 34.

Costas used *periphery* to stand for the place where Christ died; the place where, even to this day, Jesus dwells among the poor, marginalized, and oppressed; and where Jesus calls the Church to mission through the Holy Spirit. The periphery was ‘the place to which my theological itinerary has brought me. From there I am learning to live, think and communicate the faith in love and hope.’⁶¹ The periphery gave the utmost significance and perspective to his theological journey.

Upon his return to the USA, Costas was aware of his ‘sense of responsibility toward my own minority community, the Hispanic community and to other North American ethnic, racial communities.’⁶² Costas understood that, even though these communities were at the centre, they were on the periphery of the North American society. He endeavoured to help people on the periphery to ‘understand that the gospel is above all things a message of liberation.’ He challenged minority Christians who withdrew from the world to heed God’s call ‘to engage in the transformation of the world.’

Costas pointed out to Hispanics and other US minority groups that they had been granted the particular perspective of living on the periphery. Therefore they were called by God to go in mission to the dominant society of the USA.⁶³ These minority communities served as a link between the majority North American communities and peripheral communities around the world. As a result Costas worked closely with fellow Hispanics.⁶⁴ His fourth conversion led him to seek ways to serve the Hispanic community in North America.⁶⁵

Costas referred to Spanish-speaking people in North America as ‘Galileans.’⁶⁶ During Jesus’ ministry, Galilee was a province in Palestine. Its people, Galileans, came from a mix of cultures, spoke with a distinctive Galilean accent, and were looked down upon by Jewish people from other areas, especially Jerusalem. But Christ chose them to be his

⁶¹ My translation of *ibid.*

⁶² Costas, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 8. For discussion of the concepts of centre and periphery in Costas’s missiology, see: Allen Yeh, “Se hace camino al andar: Periphery and Center in the Missiology of Orlando E. Costas” (DPhil thesis: Oxford University, 2008).

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ For example at Eastern Baptist Seminary Costas trained Hispanic women and men to serve the larger Hispanic community (*ibid.*).

⁶⁵ For Costas’s writings addressed to the Hispanic community, see: Costas, ‘ConversionHCS,’ ‘Predicación evangélica y teología hispana: Los parámetros del tema,’ in *Predicación Evangélica y Teología Hispana*, ed. Costas (San Diego, CA: Publicaciones de las Américas, 1982), 14-9; ‘Los Hispanos en los Estados Unidos,’ *Misión* 2:3 (1983); ‘Evangelizing an Awakening Giant,’ in *Signs of the Kingdom in the Secular City*, ed. Frenchak and Stockwell (Chicago, IL: Covenant Press, 1984), 55-64; ‘Liberation Theology in the Americas: Common Journeys and Mutual Challenges,’ in *Yearning to Breathe Free: Liberation Theologies in the United States*, ed. Mar, Forcey and Hunter (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990), 35-44; ‘Hispanic Theology in North America,’ in *Struggles for Solidarity: Liberation Theologies in Tension*, ed. Getz and Costa (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992).

⁶⁶ Costas, ‘MissiologyUnderside,’ 8.

first missionaries. Costas used the Galileans of ancient times to stand for Hispanics in the late twentieth century. He described his ministry in the USA in this way: 'I was called to minister to the Galileans, to the U.S. born Hispanics, who spoke Spanish badly, who didn't have as good a control of the English language but who had a set of gifts and had a task to do in the future of the Hispanic community.' Galilee was always referred to in reference to the centre of power. Costas envisioned that people such as himself, people from the periphery, would move to the centre of power in North America in order to be agents of transformation of the dominant society.⁶⁷

North American Immigrant Minorities

When Costas returned to North America, he studied the cultural and social dynamics of the USA.⁶⁸ He focused on the four racial minority groups in US society: Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asians.⁶⁹ The four represented the full spectrum of the world that had borne the brunt of Western civilisation: Africa, the Middle East, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Costas described them as 'the offspring of the worst social rape in the history of humankind.' Because of economic, social, military, and political reasons, people fled their ravaged homelands and relocated in the metropolitan areas throughout North America and in the US Southwest and Midwest. They were marginalized socially, culturally, economically, and politically. Costas argued that there was little difference between the situation of the new immigrant racial minorities and that of their counterparts in other parts of the world. Furthermore, they were forced to deny their cultural heritage and were mainstreamed into the dominant white culture of the USA.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ For a list of articles connecting *Galileans* and *periphery*, see: Orlando E. Costas, 'Evangelism from the Periphery: A Galilean model,' *Apuntes* 2 (1982): 51-9; 'Evangelism from the Periphery: The Universality of Galilee,' *Apuntes* 2 (1982): 75-84; *ChristOG*, 189-94; 'Outside,' 91-3; 'Christian World Mission in a Galilean Perspective,' in *Change and Challenge*, ed. Robert (Green Lake, WI: Consultation on World Mission, 1983), 11-30; 'Christian Mission from the Periphery,' *Faith and Mission* 1 (1983): 1-12; 'Missiology Underside,' 5-9; *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989), 49-69; 'Evangelism from the Periphery: The Universality of Galilee,' in *Voces: Voices from the Hispanic Church*, ed. Justo L. González (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1992), 16-23. For other authors that used the two terms, see: James Engel and William A. Dyrness, *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 95, 166, 176; Belén González y Pérez, 'The Gospel Mandate and a Theology of Contextual Evangelization: An Essay in Honor of Dr. Orlando E. Costas,' *Apuntes* 15: 3 (1995): 83-98; Priscilla Pope-Levison, 'Comprehensive and Contextual: The Evangelism of Orlando Costas,' *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 4 (1988-89): 6-12; Norberto Saracco, 'The Liberating Options of Jesus,' in *Sharing Jesus*; 33-41; Traverzo Galarza, 'Emergence,' 4-5, 18-9.

⁶⁸ Costas, *ChristOG*, 73-4.

⁶⁹ Costas cited Eduardo Seda Bonilla, 'Ethnic Studies and Cultural Pluralism,' *The Rican* (n.d.): 1.

⁷⁰ Costas expounded on this process in the USA, explaining a variety of ways that this process took place. He also explained how various groups resisted this forced acculturation, especially by Afro-Americans.

The Two Thirds World ⁷¹

Costas's writings reveal his commitment to serve the poor and oppressed, men and women living on the periphery, and the immigrant minorities—modern day Galileans. In his literature written in the 1980s he employed the term *Two Thirds World* in a collective sense.⁷² By Two Thirds World Costas meant: 'the oppressed people of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, the Pacific, the Americas, including North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean Islands, Europe, and Australia.'⁷³ Costas found the term *Two Thirds World* useful for referring to 'the two-thirds of the world's population who live in situations of poverty, powerlessness, and oppression.'⁷⁴ Costas joined with other theologians who used the term to refer to a context for mission opportunities and activities. Costas's colleague René Padilla, for example, used the term because it 'is now widely preferred to refer to the majority of the world's population who live in conditions of poverty, powerlessness and oppression, mainly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This is also where the majority of Christians live.'

The Third World

In his magisterial work *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch addressed the use of the terms *Two Thirds World* and *Third World*.⁷⁵ According to Bosch, almost all liberation theologies identify themselves as Third World theologies or theologies of Third World within the First World, not as Two Thirds World theologies. The term *Third World* is preferred to the more frequently used term *Two Thirds World*. Since the mid-1970s, the former term has been preferred because it is sensitive to 'the experience of those who feel that they are being treated as third-class people and exploited by the powers of the First

⁷¹ C. René Padilla, 'Evangelism and Social Responsibility from Wheaton '66 to Wheaton '83,' in *How Evangelicals Endorsed Social Responsibility: Texts on Evangelical Social Ethics 1974-83 (ii)—A Commentary*, ed. Padilla and Sugden (Bramcote, Nottingham: Grove Books Ltd., 1985), 4.

⁷² Orlando E. Costas, 'Proclaiming Christ in the Two Thirds World,' in Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Sharing-Jesus*; 'Evangelical Theology in the Two Thirds World,' *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin* 9 (1985); *ibid.*, *Conflict and Context: Hermeneutics*, ed. Hermeneutics in the Americas Conference (1983) (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1986); *ibid.*, *Evangelical Review of Theology* 11 (1987); *ibid.*, in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Carpenter and Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990); *ibid.*, in *Baptist Roots*, ed. Carpenter and Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1999).

⁷³ Costas, 'Proclaiming(1984),' 4. Costas delivered this as the keynote address at the First Conference of Evangelical Mission Theologians from the Two Thirds World, held March 1982, in Bangkok, Thailand. Twenty-five theologians from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Britain, and North America discussed Two Thirds world evangelical christologies. The presentations were collected and published as: Samuel and Sugden, eds., *SharingJesus*.

⁷⁴ Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, *Partnership for Mission: A View from the Two Thirds World* (Bangalore: Partnership in Mission-Asia, 1983), 2. Costas joined with Samuel and Sugden to organise the Bangkok Conference.

⁷⁵ David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 432.

and Second Worlds.’ The latter term, on the other hand, is rejected by many of those associated with the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians because ‘it only reflects the geographical size and population of the Third World, not its political and socio-economic position at the “underside of history.”’

Costas employed the term *Third World* in the 1970s and into the early 1980s to express his solidarity with the poor, but then used only *Two Thirds World* after 1984.⁷⁶ He used the two terms to mean essentially the same thing and used them interchangeably. Both terms were used by Costas to refer to people all over the world who live in poverty, powerlessness, and oppression. But unlike his brief explanation of *Two Thirds World*, the meaning he gave to the concept of *Third World* was more nuanced.

In a chapter on the prophetic significance of liberation theologies Costas explained what he meant by his use of the term *Third World*.⁷⁷ He offered a brief survey of the history of the term and identified its ideological and geographical aspects. His definition, however, dismissed these aspects and focused on socio-economic definitions of the term. Therefore the Third World meant ‘the world of the sociological impoverished, oppressed, and margined.’ It was not confined to Third World areas, but present as well in the Industrialized, capitalist countries (the First World) and the socialist, Soviet bloc countries (the Second World).

Costas identified a commonality between the oppressed and marginalized in the developed capitalist countries and those in the Third World. Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and aboriginal peoples in the industrialized, capitalist nations were ‘the colonial and neo-colonial projects’ of those nations.⁷⁸ Whereas oppressed and marginalized people in the Third World were in the majority, the same people in the First World were in the minority. Taken together Third World people made up more than two-thirds of the world’s population. The sense from reading Costas’s material is that what he meant by *Third World* is the same as what he meant by the use of *Two Thirds World*.

⁷⁶ The use of the term *Two Thirds World* was significant in two of his writings in the 1980s. The *Third World* term was used more in both decades: Costas, *ChurchIM*; ‘The USA: A Mission Field for Third World Christians?’ *Review and Expositor* 74 (1977); ‘A Strategy for Third World Missions,’ in *World Missions: Building Bridges or Barriers?*, ed. Theodore (Bangalore, India: WEF Missions Commission, 1980); ‘A Strategy for Third World Missions,’ in *The Church in New Frontiers for Missions*, ed. David (Pasadena, CA: Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center, 1983); ‘Christian Faith in the Third World,’ in *Educating for Christian Missions: Supporting Christian Missions Through Education*, ed. Arthur Lonzo Walker (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1981).

⁷⁷ Costas, *ChristOG*, 118-19.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 119.

Two other citations address the issue of the meaning of the term *Third World*. The following refers to the term's use with the following meaning that echoes what Costas meant by the term:

Currently "Third World" is used as a self-designation of peoples who have been excluded from power and the authority to shape their own lives and destiny. As such it has a supra-geographic denotation, describing a social condition marked by social, political, religious, and cultural oppressions that render people powerless and expendable. Thus the Third World also encompasses those people in the First World who form a dominated and marginalized minority.⁷⁹

In 1982 Costas echoed the definition above by using Gustavo Gutiérrez's description of Third World peoples as those on the *underside of history*.⁸⁰ The people on the underside of history are

those who have suffered the last five hundred years of human history but have not been able to shape it. They are the victims of global injustice and exploitation, condemned to a history of poverty and marginalisation. In spite of its historic humiliation and exploitation, its technological backwardness and dependence, the third world is nevertheless a place of struggle, patience, courage, and hope.⁸¹

Regardless of whether Costas used *Two Thirds World* or *Third World*, he was referring to the majority of the world's population who were not only socio-economically impoverished and exploited, but also struggling for a just future. The Third World social context shaped the emerging theologies of people on the underside of history.⁸² The Third World was the primary point of reference for Costas's missiological thought. The Third World was where Costas wanted to be.

Critical Comments

This chapter examined how three of the conversions Costas identified were worked out through his theological itinerary. They were his conversion to the discovery of his Latin

⁷⁹ Virginia Fabella, 'Third World,' in *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, ed. Fabella and Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000). For an in depth discussion of the term, see: Kofi Buenor Hadjor, *Dictionary of Third World Terms* (London / New York: Penguin, 1993), 1-14.

⁸⁰ Costas, *ChristOG*, 119. For more on the *underside of history*, see Costas's referrals: Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología desde el Reverso de la Historia* (Lima: Centro de Publicaciones, 1977); revised and enlarged in: *La Fuerza Histórica de los Pobres* (Lima: Centro de Publicaciones, 1979); and translated into English as: *The Power of the Poor in History*. Peruvian theologian Gutiérrez's *Teología de la Liberación* (1972) and its English translation, *Theology of Liberation* (1973) are considered classics of Latin American liberation theology (LT). For more on Gutiérrez and LT, see chapter four of this thesis.

⁸¹ Costas, *ChristOG*, 119.

⁸² Both *Third World* and *Two Thirds World* were used by Costas in his writings to address the same reality. Fabella noted the term *Third World* has been called into question at the end of last century, especially after the dissolution of the Second World after 1989 (Fabella, 'ThirdWorld'). The latter term was said to focus on numbers of people rather than a quality of life. Costas was clearer on what he meant by the use of the term *Third World* than he was by the use of *Two Thirds World*. The former is preferable to the other and, therefore, the former is employed in this thesis.

American and Puerto Rican heritage and identity, his socio-political conversion, and his conversion to return to the USA and serve those who dwell on the periphery there. These three conversions were the engines that powered him on his theological journey and his destination was Latin America and the Third World. His primary concern was to examine critically the Church's engagement with the people of Latin America and the Third World, especially the poor, powerless, and oppressed.

The terms *periphery*, *Two Thirds World*, and *Third World* are significant themes in Costas's writings. They point to the same reality that God is at work among the poor, the exploited, and the oppressed of the world. Jesus died among the people of the *periphery* and even now dwells with them there. God calls the Church to mission engagement in the periphery. The transformation of the world comes out of the periphery. Costas's theological itinerary led him there. The periphery gave him perspective on the Church's mission. The term periphery is not only a significant theme in Costas's writings, but it is also a key concept. It is an organising concept that shapes Costas's missiology, especially his theology of contextual evangelisation that is examined in chapter seven of this thesis.

Starting in the 1980s, Costas used the term *Two Thirds World* to refer to the two-thirds of the world's people who live on the peripheries of the world's societies. Before that time, Costas used the term *Third World*. The Third World was the established way of referring to the people who described themselves as not having any control over their own lives and destinies. Third World peoples had suffered through five centuries of being excluded from shaping their own histories and destinies. Costas transferred the meaning of Third World to the Two Thirds World. But the term Third World is especially technical and nuanced so that it is sensitive to, and able to convey, the critical socio-economic, political, and theological issues of the 1960s onward.

The meaning of both the periphery and the Two Thirds World is rooted in the accepted meaning of the Third World. It is the solid foundation by which the other terms make sense of the world. Since the 1980s Two Thirds World has been used more frequently than Third World. Costas's use periphery gives a perspective to missiological issues that is distinctly Costas's. But even into the 21st century, Third World has been preferred as the authorised term by theologians committed to doing theology in contexts these three terms represent. The term Third World is, therefore, the preferred term in this thesis. But it is not the only term that refers to the reality that Costas had identified. The terms Third World, periphery, and Two Thirds World refer to the same reality that is examined in this chapter.

Psalm 106: A Point of Reference

Psalm 106 is introduced at this point in the thesis as a counter narrative to the one presented by Costas. The psalm provides a point of reference by which Costas's missiological reflection is examined and assessed. Because of Costas's affirmation of the evangelical tenet of the authority of Scripture, it is assumed that he would have recognised Psalm 106 as a divine text. This particular psalm was selected because the psalmist reflects theologically on the historical narrative of ancient Israel's forty years of wandering in the wilderness after Yahweh had liberated her from oppression in Egypt.

Psalm 106 was most likely composed by a Levite in post-exilic Jerusalem. The psalmist ponders the relationship between recently liberated Israel and Yahweh, her liberator God. The psalm can also be read as a reflective summary of events covered in the books of Exodus and Numbers in the Pentateuch. It provides the historical context for confession of sin and acts of repentance by the future generations of God's people. Yahweh was constantly faithful to Israel despite her constant unfaithfulness.

In the Psalm's opening verses the psalmist praises and thanks Yahweh for all that God has done (1-5). Yahweh is good and characterized by steadfast covenantal love. God performs mighty acts, maintains justice, constantly does what is right, saves God's people, and provides them with an inheritance. The psalmist recounts that Yahweh delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt (7ab; 21), rescued her by leading her through the Red Sea (8, 22b), and destroyed the enemies pursuing her (10-11).

Despite all that Yahweh had done on Israel's behalf, the people of Israel did not offer thanks and praise to their divine liberator. Remembering Israel's experience of slavery, liberation, and wilderness wandering, the psalmist makes a communal confession to Yahweh that he, his ancestors, and the present worshipping community have all constantly sinned, done wrong, and acted wickedly (6). Israel did not acknowledge God's miracles, did not recognize Yahweh's kindness, and rebelled against God at the Red Sea (7). She sang Yahweh's praise only for a short time, quickly forgot what God had done for them, and disregarded God's ways (13).

The Israelite people sought to fulfil their needs their own way, and thereby challenged Yahweh and God's ways (14). They envied Moses and Aaron, Israel's divinely authorised leaders (16), and made and worshipped a golden calf (19-20). Israel forgot all that Yahweh had done for them in Egypt and the Red Sea (21-2) and despised Yahweh for where God had led them. She did not believe God's promises (24) and grumbled and

disobeyed Yahweh (25). That is only half of the psalm and there are more sins of Israel listed in the second half of the psalm.

Yahweh was angry at the sinful behaviour of Israel and gave her over to be oppressed and abused by her enemies; but God also heard her cries of distress, remembered the covenant God had established with Israel, and delivered her (40-6). The psalmist addresses the worshipping people of Israel to call upon Yahweh to save them and bring them all together so that Israel may thank and praise the Lord their God (47). The psalm ends with praise to Yahweh as Israel's God (48). The psalm presents Yahweh standing against a people that God had recently liberated from bondage and injustice. Israel was characterised as constantly complaining against Yahweh, wandering from God, disobeying Yahweh, and rebelling against God. Yet despite all this, Yahweh remains steadfastly faithful in God's relationship with Israel.

This is a prominent theme throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, and is evident in the New Testament in terms of Jesus Christ's relationship with the Church. Psalm 78 is another long historical narrative that parallels Psalm 106. Psalms 81:10-12 and 95:8-11, and Nehemiah 9 reflect the same theme. The editor of the book of Judges uses the theme to describe the cyclical pattern of Yahweh's covenantal relationship with Israel in the early settlement period in Canaan (2:11-23), illustrating the pattern with historical accounts from the tribal histories. The pattern is constantly repeated throughout the book: the Israelite people disobey and become apostate, and God submits Israel to the oppression of her enemies. When they cry out to God for deliverance, God hears Israel's cries, remembers God's covenantal commitment to her, and sends a judge to release them from her oppressor.

The book of Judges, unfortunately, reveals that Israel never learned her lesson and thus went through the cycle repeatedly. The author of Hebrews used the example of Yahweh's dealings with an unfaithful Israel in the wilderness wanderings to warn Hebrew Christians that they were susceptible to the same infidelity. They were charged to guard their hearts against living like their rebellious, complaining, and unbelieving post-Exodus ancestors in the wilderness (3:7-11).

Costas and Psalm 106

This section is centred on two narratives: Psalm 106's historical narrative with its theological reflection of Israel in the wilderness and Costas's narrative constructed around the Third World / Two Thirds World / periphery concept. They provide the mate-

rial for a study in contrasts. In Costas's writings, the Third World is best expressed as the periphery, the place of poverty, powerlessness, and exploitation. That is where Costas's attention was focused. In Psalm 106, the psalmist's attention is focused on another type of periphery, the wilderness, where Yahweh has led God's liberated people.

In Costas's writings, Third World people are the sinned against. They are the victims of oppression, domination, exploitation, and marginalization. But in the psalm, the once enslaved, now liberated people of Israel, are the sinners against Yahweh, their liberator. They rebel against God, constantly complain, and seek to go their own way. According to Costas, God calls liberated people on the periphery to transform the world into one of justice and peace. The psalmist, on the other hand, recounts the times that Israel, the once enslaved people, rebelled against Yahweh's historical projects. They sought every opportunity to ditch Yahweh and go their own way.

Costas was focused on socio-economic and political issues whereas Psalm 106 assessed Israel's obedience and faithfulness to her covenant with Yahweh. In Costas's view of Third World reality, Christ is present with the poor, the powerless, the oppressed, and those who suffer, ushering them into an era in which they can shape their own history. There is no indication of a God who judges. God is submerged into human society and made perceptible through struggles for justice, by folk music, in popular religiosity, and even on the football pitch.

In contrast, Psalm 106 portrays Yahweh active in history judging both the Egyptian slave masters and the former Israelite slaves. According to Psalm 106, God not only judged Egypt for her enslavement, oppression, and exploitation of Israel, but also judged Israel for her unfaithfulness, disobedience, and rebellion. The Egyptians suffered the loss of their firstborn, but a whole generation of Israelites who had experienced the Exodus died in the wilderness. Yahweh is portrayed as the God who is active in history and stands against Egyptian oppressor and liberated Israelite alike.

Chapter Conclusions

The foundation of Costas's missiology was the singular narrative that God is present among the poor, the powerless, the oppressed, and those who suffer. As people of the Third World / Two Thirds World / periphery, they have been excluded from shaping their own lives and destinies for 500 years. But God has engaged with their critical socio-economic, and political issues and liberated them to shape the world into one of peace and justice. In contrast to Costas's narrative is Psalm 106's historical narrative and theologi-

cal reflection of Israel in the wilderness. Costas seems to have put aside *Amazing Grace!* in order to focus on the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song.

CHAPTER THREE

The Latin American Protestant Church In A Revolutionary Situation

Costas was disturbed by the brutal oppression and injustice he saw in Latin America, and so he committed himself to exploring ways that the Church could engage with a continent in such revolutionary turmoil. This chapter examines some of Costas's writings on Protestantism in a revolutionary situation. First, the chapter recognises Costas's challenge to the Latin American Church that she be a catalyst for revolution. Second, it looks at his survey of various Protestant churches and his critical assessment of their engagement with the society around them. Then the chapter examines selected portions of Costas's research concerning the missiology of Latin American mainline Protestantism, 1969 to 1974. Finally, it considers Costas's challenge to churches to go 'outside' the gate into the periphery of life.

A Call to Revolution

In one of the first articles he wrote, Costas considered the relationship between the Latin American Church and a continent whose socio-economic conditions made it ripe for revolution.¹ Latin American theologians of the time contended that revolution was inevitable.² Costas joined with those who called the Church to be committed to revolutionary

¹ Orlando E. Costas, 'Latin American Revolutions and the Church,' *Foundations* 14 (1971): 116-27. When Costas used the word 'church' with a lowercase 'c' he was referring to the Universal Church and when an uppercase 'C' was used he was referring to a particular denomination or tradition. In this thesis an uppercase 'C' refers to the universal Church except when Costas's writings are directly cited.

² Ibid., 121-22. For other texts on the Church and revolution, see: José Comblin, *Teología de la Misión* (Buenos Aires: Latinoamérica Libros, 1974); idem, *The Meaning of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1977); Emilio Castro, *Amidst Revolution*, trans. James and Margaret (Belfast: Christian Journals Limited, 1975); Hugo Assmann, *Teología desde la Praxis de la Liberación: Ensayo teológico desde la América dependiente* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1973); José Míguez-Bonino, "Visión del cambio social y sus tareas desde las iglesias cristianas no-católicas," in *Fe Cristiana y Cambio Social en América Latina* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1972); idem, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Philadelphia: Fortress 1975); Hugo Assmann, *Opresión-Liberación: Desafío a los Cristianos* (Montevideo, Uruguay: Tierra Nueva, 1971); idem, *Cristianos por el Socialismo: Exigencias de una opción* (Montevideo: Tierra Nueva, 1973); Hugo Assmann and World Council of Churches, *Dominación y Dependencia: Las iglesias y los cristianos en el contexto de las relaciones de dominación y dependencia* (Buenos Aires: Tierra Nueva, 1975); Mortimer Arias, ed., *Evangelización y Revolución en América Latina* (Montevideo: Iglesia, 1969); Jornadas Fe Cristiana y Cambio Social en América Latina, *Fe Cristiana y Cambio Social* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1974); Andrew Kirk, *Theology Encounters Revolution* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980); Johannes Verkuyl and H. G. Schulte Nordholt, *Responsible Revolution*, trans. Smedes

action on behalf of the poor and oppressed. The Church could no longer be neutral because this would be perceived as indicating she was allied with the rich and powerful. The Church, Costas argued, could only be faithful to her God-given mission if she stood with the poor and the oppressed.

Costas justified this position on the Church's engagement in revolutionary activity using three doctrines: the *imago Dei*; the Incarnation; and the Church.³ The doctrine of the image of God provided the grounds for people dissatisfied with the *status quo* to labour for a better future.⁴ The doctrine of the Incarnation set the pattern for the Church's mission: as the Son became human, lived in the world, and stood with the poor and the oppressed, so the Church was called by God to live in the world and be on the side of the powerless and marginalized.⁵ Thus Christ's mission provided the basis for the Church's involvement in revolutionary times. The doctrine of the Church viewed her as a prophetic, priestly, and apostolic community, serving in the world as an agent of transformation, renewal, and change.⁶ Costas concluded that 'the church can and must be viewed as a catalyst for revolution.'⁷ She could 'never be satisfied with the status quo, for to do so would mean her collapse and the failure of her mission in the world.'⁸

Costas critically assessed the Latin American Church and the North American missionary enterprise. His verdict: both of them had failed as catalysts for revolutionary change.⁹ He lamented that 'very few Latin Christian leaders and even less (*sic*) missionaries have done very much in setting an example of a responsible apostolic, prophetic, and priestly ministry.' Protestants tended to exhibit a conservative religious faith that failed to engage with socio-economic and political issues. This 'limited the proclamation of the gospel and the redemptive mission of the church to mere verbal speech.'¹⁰

Revolution and Hope

Costas hoped revolution would transform Latin American society and the Latin American Church. He described Christianity in Latin America this way: 'For four and a half centuries Latin America has known a legalistic, irrelevant, dead, and impersonal Chris-

(Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1974); Justo L. González, *Revolución y Encarnación* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: La Reforma, 1965).

³ Costas, 'LARevolutions,' 122-3.

⁴ Ibid., 122.

⁵ Ibid., 122-3. Costas referred to: González, *Revolución Encarnación*.

⁶ Costas, 'LARevolutions,' 122-23.

⁷ Ibid, 123.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 124.

¹⁰ Ibid.

tianity' that was incorporated into the established political order. He expected, however, that in the coming revolution 'this kind of Christianity will be completely overthrown.' The Church would then be shaped to the extent she became involved in this revolution. Therefore revolution would be an agent of change in the Church.¹¹

Costas foresaw that a transformed Church would produce spiritual renewal as well as social, political, and economic changes for Latin America.¹² This would happen only if the Church were an apostolic and prophetic community of renewal, love, and ministry. He already perceived elements in the Roman Catholic Church that were catalysts for revolution of society as well as agents of transformation in the Catholic Church.¹³ There was some evidence this was occurring in parts of the Latin American Protestant community as well.¹⁴

Revolution and Missionaries

Costas was concerned that North American missionaries were not teaching women and men studying in Latin American Bible schools and seminaries to contribute to revolutionary action in the continent.¹⁵ He challenged North American missionary teachers to exercise their influence and authority as servant-leaders to equip future Latin American leaders to be catalysts for revolution.¹⁶ Missionaries were also summoned to become more sensitive to the people missionaries were serving, to become more aware of the critical issues in their own community, and to become increasingly conscious of the socio-political and economic issues in their own lives. Costas hoped they would model contextual theological reflection for their students. Missionary teachers were also called to proclaim the Christian message personally and collectively in word and deed.¹⁷

Costas addressed other issues he had with North American missionaries serving in Latin America.¹⁸ There were missionaries who were insensitive to the revolutionary spirit of the time, who were hesitant to join with Latin Americans committed to radical social change, or who were unwilling to explore ways Christians could work cooperatively with

¹¹ Ibid. The use of 'Church' here refers to both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 125.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 126.

persons outside the Church who were committed to revolutionary action.¹⁹ He charged that missionary efforts in Latin America would fail as long as missionaries did not relate to people seeking revolutionary change.²⁰ Costas also pointed out an attitude of superiority that characterized many missionaries regarding their Latin American colleagues.²¹

The Challenge to Revolution

Costas concluded the article by again challenging the Church to pursue mission that purposefully engaged with the socio-economic and political issues of Latin America. He warned that 'the church cannot hide any longer behind the excuse that it has only a spiritual mission.'²² He criticized the evangelical contention that all that was needed for social change to take place was for the hearts of individual men and women to be converted to faith in Jesus Christ. The masses of Latin American people could not wait for the Church to preach the gospel to everybody and for all of them to experience a change of heart. People were desperate for a radical change of the way things were and for the establishment of justice in the land. Only if the Church became a catalyst for revolution would she 'have the opportunity to exercise a healing ministry in the Latin America of tomorrow.'²³

Latin American Protestantism

In a 1975 collection of his essays Costas analysed the character of the Latin American 'evangelical' Church and located it within the larger Latin American society.²⁴ It is not clear whether he used the Spanish 'evangélica' to refer to Protestantism in general or to evangelical Protestantism in particular. The literary context of the whole collection suggests that Costas intended the former meaning for 'evangélica.'²⁵ In the first essay of the collection, written in 1972, he argued a congregation's views on mission and social ethics were reflected in its worship.²⁶ The way that a congregation worshipped indicated how

¹⁹ Costas wondered if this was why many contemporary thinkers viewed the Church as a counter-revolutionary force. As an example Costas referred to: Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

²⁰ Costas, 'LAREvolutions,' 127.

²¹ Ibid., 126.

²² Ibid., 127.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Orlando E. Costas, *El Protestantismo en América Latina Hoy: Ensayos del camino (1972-1974)* (San José, Costa Rica: Publicaciones INDEF, 1975), vii-viii, 3-8.

²⁵ For a careful study of the liberal, evangelical, and Pentecostal forms of Latin American Protestantism, see: José Míguez-Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1997), especially 1-78.

²⁶ Orlando E Costas, 'La realidad de iglesia evangélica latinoamericana,' in *El Protestantismo en América Latina Hoy*, ed. Costas (San José Publicaciones INDEF, 1975), 1-40. Costas presented the essay at the First Consultation on Evangelical Social Ethics in Lima, Peru, 5-8 July 1972. A condensed form was published

its people engaged with the immediate context. Costas examined the worship of three ‘ecclesiastical currents’²⁷ of Latin American Protestantism: 1) churches based on the churches in the home countries of immigrants to Latin America; 2) churches established by foreign missionaries; and 3) churches in the Pentecostal tradition.²⁸

The Transplanted Churches

The first group, seen from one end of the continent to the other, was composed of transplanted foreign communities²⁹ These transplanted communities, mainly from Europe established themselves as semi-independent rural colonies. There also were Protestant churches that were started by employees of foreign businesses working in Latin America. They brought their Protestant church from their homeland and transplanted it wherever they settled. The immigrants formed their own communities, spoke their native language, preserved the values of their home country, and opposed attempts to incorporate them into the culture of their new country. They did not integrate into the larger community around them.³⁰

Protestant Mission Churches

The second group Costas identified represented churches established by Protestant missions.³¹ They were predominantly established as ‘free churches.’³² They originated in Europe, sprang up all over North America, and swelled into Latin America and the rest of the world. The Pietist movement influenced the formation of the European free churches in the 18th century and, by means of free church missions, entered into Latin American Protestantism.³³

as: ‘La realidad de la iglesia evangélica latinoamericana,’ in *Fe Cristiana y América Latina Hoy*, ed. Padilla (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Certeza, 1974).

²⁷ My translation of Costas, ‘Realidad (1975),’ 8. Costas’s system of categorizing Latin American Protestantism was unique.

²⁸ These were indigenous Pentecostal churches and Pentecostal churches established by Pentecostal missionaries.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ This and following remarks were made by: Julio De Santa Ana, *Cristianismo sin Religión* (Montevideo: Editorial Alfa, 1969), 44.

³¹ Costas, ‘Realidad (1975),’ 8-10.

³² Costas defined free churches as those formed by European-based churches and mission agencies that opposed State interference in church affairs.

³³ Pietism is described as ‘a recurring tendency within Christian history to emphasize more the practicalities of Christian life and less the formal structures of theology or church order.’ Its four chief characteristics are: 1) the stress on the experiential aspect of faith; 2) a reliance on the Bible as the ultimate authority on all matters of faith and life; 3) a perfectionist orientation; and 4) a commitment to reform the Church’s life and mission, especially her worship (Mark A Noll, ‘Pietism,’ in *EDT*, ed. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1994), 855-6. For more on the Pietist Movement, see: David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 252-255; Noll, ‘Pietism.’

Costas identified three types of churches connected with the Protestant free church missionary movement.³⁴ The first type, the historic Protestant denominations, was composed of Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and the various congregational denominations. The second type was made of younger denominations like the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Church of the Nazarene, and the Evangelical Free Churches. The 'faith mission' churches made up the third type of Protestant mission churches in Latin America.³⁵ Even though the faith missions did not establish churches connected to a Protestant denomination, there was a tendency for a denomination or association to evolve from faith mission-founded churches.

Another way Costas used to classify churches of foreign missionary origin was to identify whether a church was started by a Protestant mission with a civilising motive or by one with an evangelising motive.³⁶ Churches and denominations founded by the Protestant civilising-minded mission organizations focused their efforts on establishing hospitals, radio stations, schools, summer camps for children, and orphanages. The mission orientation of the historic Protestant denominations of North America and Western Europe tended to shape their missionary activity according to the civilising motive.

Meanwhile the more recent denominations and faith missions tended to establish churches based on the evangelistic emphasis. Costas was aware of young people in this type of church who questioned the evangelistic emphasis and sought more of the civilizing aspect to balance the life and mission of their churches.³⁷ Methodist theologian Míguez-Bonino described the situation in one evangelical denomination as a conflict between the new ideas of young people and the traditional views of their elders.³⁸ Furthermore Latin American Protestants became embroiled in the conflict between fundamentalists and theological liberals that had been imported to the southern continent by North

³⁴ Costas, 'Realidad (1975),' 9.

³⁵ Faith missions did not represent any one denomination, but drew personnel from a number of denominations. Therefore they were interdenominational or independent. The word 'faith' referred to missionaries being sent out without any guarantee of financial income. Therefore they were expected to live by faith that God would provide for all their needs. For more on faith missions, see: Ralph R Covell, 'Faith Missions,' in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 209-14; Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions: From Hudson Taylor to Present-Day Africa* (Irvine, CA: Regnum, 1994); Edwin L. Frizen, Jr., *75 Years of IFMA, 1917-1992: The Nondenominational Missions Movement* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992).

³⁶ Costas, 'Realidad (1975),' 9-10. Regarding this point Costas referred to: José Míguez-Bonino, 'Cristianismo en América Latina,' *Orientación* 19 (1971): 9.

³⁷ Costas, 'Realidad (1975),' 9-10. Costas referred to: Míguez-Bonino, 'Cristianismo,' 10.

³⁸ Míguez-Bonino suggested what was happening in the Methodist Church in Argentina was an example of the conflict between the two tendencies regarding missionary activity. These two tendencies often existed side by side in the historic Protestant denominations in Latin America.

American missionaries of both persuasions.³⁹ Thus evangelistically oriented churches and missions tended to assume a fundamentalist posture while the civilizing oriented churches and missions took on a theologically liberal one.

The Pentecostal Churches

The Pentecostal movement was the third current of Latin American Protestantism Costas examined and it was broken up into two groups.⁴⁰ The first group identified was composed of classic Pentecostal churches⁴¹ A second group was made up of congregations that were members of historic denominations and faith mission church associations that were affected by the charismatic renewal movement.⁴²

³⁹ Evangelicals tended to interact with the world whereas the fundamentalists separated from it. For more information on fundamentalism and mission, see: James A Patterson, 'Fundamentalist Denominational Missions,' in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Joel Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Books on Demand, 1998), 73-91. For more on fundamentalism in the USA, see: C.T. McIntire, 'Fundamentalism,' in *EDT*, ed. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984); George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*. 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Martin E. Marty, *et al*, *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). For discussion on fundamentalism in Latin America, see: Florencio Galindo, *El Protestantismo Fundamentalista: Una experiencia ambigua para América Latina* (Navarra, España: Editorial Verbo Divino, 1992); idem, *El "Fenómeno de las Sectas" Fundamentalistas: La conquista evangélica de América Latina*. 2nd. ed. (Navarra, España: Editorial Verbo Divino, 1994); Míguez-Bonino, *Faces / LA Protestantism*, 34-9.

The term 'modernist' was first used to refer to Roman Catholic theologians of late nineteenth century who were critical of traditional Christian doctrine, employed radical biblical criticism, and favoured ethics over theology. It was an attempt by Catholic writers to come to terms with the Christian faith in the context of an Enlightenment worldview, but it never became a distinct school of thought [Alister E McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Cambridge, MA / Oxford Blackwell Publishers Inc. / Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 1997), 105]. What Modernism was to Catholicism was referred to as 'theological liberalism' in Protestantism. It can be assumed that Míguez-Bonino was referring to Protestant theological liberalism in the article cited by Costas. McGrath stated that 'Liberal Protestantism is unquestionably one of the most important movements to have arisen within modern Christian thought.' It flourished between the times of F. D. E. Schleiermacher and P. Tillich. It was the result of 19th century German theology's attempt to recast Christian faith and theology in line with modern thought so that Christianity would be intellectually acceptable to a modern world shaped by the Enlightenment (ibid., 101). For discussion of missiology and modernism/ theological liberalism, see: Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 37, 49-61 (Type B Theology); William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); James A. Patterson, 'Liberal Theology,' in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Carpenter and Shenk, eds., *Earthen Vessels*. For a more recent discussion of Latin American liberal Protestantism, see: Míguez-Bonino, *Faces / LA Protestantism*, 1-26.

⁴⁰ Costas, 'Realidad (1975),' 10-1.

⁴¹ McGrath described the Pentecostal and charismatic movements as '[o]ne of the most significant developments in Christianity in the twentieth century.' 'Pentecostal' refers back to the events on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12) that both Pentecostals and charismatics viewed as a pattern for the Christian life. Classical Pentecostalism is considered the first modern era movement to have rediscovered and manifested the power, fruit, and gifts of the Spirit. Pentecostalism arose in the early 1900s in the USA, and was characterised by the manifestation of speaking in tongues (McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 124-5).

⁴² The Charismatic movement has also been referred to as the Neo-Pentecostal Movement and the charismatic renewal movement. The movement, which arose in the 1960s, continues to promote the main tenets of the older Pentecostal movement, especially speaking in tongues. The movement has made an impact in the Roman Catholic Church and in such historic Protestant denominations as Presbyterians, Methodists,

The classic Pentecostal churches emerged from the spiritual awakening among Protestants in the second half of the first decade of the 20th century.⁴³ This awakening became a movement of churches that separated from denominations or associations and formed denominations of like-minded congregations. Because they charged that the Protestant churches had neglected the Spirit, the new Pentecostal associations emphasised the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The charismatic movement, on the other hand, carried a Pentecostal message of renewal into the Roman Catholic Church, the established and more recent Protestant denominations, and even into the classic Pentecostal churches.⁴⁴ In terms of Protestantism Costas argued it was a reaction against the rigidity of polity and theology of the classical Pentecostal churches, against the diminishing spiritual fervour of the Protestant denominations, and against the losses of mission and identity of the faith missions. Charismatic Christians diagnosed a loss of purpose, growth, and vitality in all Protestant groups.

Two Worship Styles

Costas made three comments on the worship styles in Latin American evangelical churches. The first two comments dealt with two types of worship styles used in the churches and how they reflected the churches' relationship with the communities around them.⁴⁵ In the third comment Costas critiqued both worship styles. The first worship style, 'the repetitive type, characterized the worship in the majority of Latin American evangelical congregations.'⁴⁶ Protestantism appeared as 'a repressive, domesticating and alienating movement that disengages its adherents from their own people, subjugates them to foreign forms and disconnects them from life and problems of the society.'⁴⁷ This style of worship alienated worshippers from the real world and encouraged them to escape engagement with life and death issues in their communities.

Second, Costas contrasted the worship of the repetitive-type churches with that of the Pentecostal churches, the second type of worship.⁴⁸ The worship of the latter was characterised by spontaneity, creativity, and participation. It was a lively human expression of

and Lutherans. Charismatic Christians promoted other charismatic gifts such as healing, prophecy, and words of knowledge.

⁴³ Costas, 'Realidad (1975),' 10-1.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁴⁵ Ibid. Costas did sociological analyses of Latin American evangelical congregations. For example, he examined how theological terms were used and what the content of the hymns expressed.

⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, 11-15 for more information on the repetitive style of worship that was in a significant number of Latin American evangelical churches. This type of evangelical church was usually connected with a denomination in North America and/or founded by missionaries.

⁴⁷ My translation of *ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 16-22, 30.

‘a liberating psycho-social experience, a hope for whole liberation, a genuine organizational indigenization and an autochthonous liturgical creation.’⁴⁹ This Pentecostal-type of worship, Costas wrote, fitted the Latin American context whereas the North Atlantic missionary imported repetitive-style worship alienated Latin American Christians from their reality.⁵⁰

Third, even though Pentecostal worship was more authentically Latin American than the other style, Costas commented that it ‘reflects an egocentric church, that [it] is concerned about society only to the extent it threatens its own interests.’⁵¹ Even though Pentecostalism offered more freedom to congregants than the other Latin American Protestant churches, it shared many aspects with the other churches.⁵² All Protestant groups tended to view society as nothing more than the sum of individuals. Latin American Pentecostalism did not recognise any global or systematic aspects of the faith. It imported a traditional Protestant ethical system that it used to buttress traditional local and national institutions and its adherents evaded responsibility in the socio-political areas of life. Therefore Protestantism in general ‘was converted into one of the principal agents of the *status quo* in a continent where change is not a luxury, but an inevitable necessity.’⁵³

In the 1971 article referred to at the beginning of this chapter Costas challenged the Church to engage with a continent in a revolutionary situation. Only in this way would the Church be faithful to the mission that God had given her to do. In the 1972 essay examined in the previous section he analysed the worship styles of Latin American evangelical churches and discovered that the two styles of worship encouraged a disengagement from the world, not engagement. This explained why the churches did not respond to the call to revolution.

The Charismatic Renewal Movement

In 1972 Costas described the charismatic renewal movement (CRM) as a ‘very young but significant movement that is gaining momentum in Latin America.’⁵⁴ Reflecting on a CRM conference he had recently attended Costas described what he witnessed as ‘a

⁴⁹ My translation of *ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁰ Costas acknowledged the insights found in: Míguez-Bonino, ‘Cristianismo,’ 77-113.

⁵¹ My translation of Costas, *El Protestantismo en América Latina Hoy: Ensayos del camino (1972-1974)*, 30.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 22-30.

⁵³ My translation of *ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁴ Orlando E. Costas, ‘Dateline Buenos Aires,’ *World Vision* (1972): 22.

growing indigenous movement that is sweeping the continent, the renewal movement of the Holy Spirit.’⁵⁵

In *The Theology of the Crossroads* he briefly surveyed the CRM and recognised its positive influence on the Latin American Church.⁵⁶ In 1977 Costas considered the pros and cons of the charismatic movement and acknowledged that it was a force to contend with in Latin America.⁵⁷ The last twenty-five years have seen an explosion of research on the CRM.⁵⁸

Protestantism in Chile

In 1976 Costas evaluated the extraordinary rate of growth of the Protestant church in Chile between 1910 and 1975.⁵⁹ Despite 65 years of dramatic church growth he described it as a ‘mutilation of mission.’⁶⁰ In the course of Costas’s evaluation he analysed the Pentecostal churches in Chile, then the majority churches in Chilean Protestantism. Pentecostal mission was not as mutilated as that of other Protestants. Pentecostals were prophetic and reached out to the marginalized and oppressed and their view of conversion included an ethical demand to change one’s lifestyle, a demand lacking in most Protestant views of the same.⁶¹ But Costas’s primary criticism of the Pentecostals was that they failed to reach the middle and upper classes. The explosive growth of Pentecostalism did not produce change on the societal level because Protestants in Chile had failed to engage with the larger society in ways that would have led to transformation of the society.

⁵⁵ The conference, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from March 19 to 24, 1972, brought together eighty leaders of the Latin American charismatic movement. It was the first gathering of the movement on the continent.

⁵⁶ Orlando E. Costas, *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology at the Crossroads in Mainline Protestantism, 1969-1974* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi NV, 1976), 77-80.

⁵⁷ Orlando E. Costas, 'A Latin American Theologian Looks at the Charismatic Movement – Pros and Cons,' *Latin American Evangelist* 57:3 (1977): 10-1. See also: W. Dayton Roberts, 'Latin America's Charismatics Are Here to Stay,' *Latin American Evangelist* (1977): 10ff.

⁵⁸ For perspectives on the charismatic movement in Latin America (which is predominantly Roman Catholic), see: Emilio A Núñez C. and William D. Taylor, *Crisis in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 283-301.

For works on missions from a charismatic perspective, see: Edward K. Pousson, *Spreading the Flame: Charismatic Churches and Missions Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1992); Andrew Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission: A Holistic Charismatic Missiology* (Bletchley: Paternoster, 2005); Núñez C. and Taylor, *CrisisLA*, 283-301.

⁵⁹ Orlando E. Costas, 'Our Mission and Church Growth: Towards a Missiology of Masses and Minority Groups,' *Theological Fraternity Bulletin* 4 (1976): 9-14. For another article that is similar but with a few minor differences, see: *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982), 52-54.

⁶⁰ Costas, 'Our Mission,' 13.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

In Costas's view, Chilean Pentecostalism reflected the tendencies of Pentecostalism in general. He concluded from the data from Chile that individuals experienced profound personal and spiritual liberation and transformation, but that the larger segments of Chilean society did not experience the same.⁶² In his writings Costas argued repeatedly that the Church's mission was to engage with socio-economic and political issues of societies as well as with the personal and spiritual concerns of individuals. But both Chilean Pentecostalism in particular and Pentecostalism in general presented a form of the gospel that liberated and transformed individuals but failed to liberate and transform their larger societies. Costas was constantly calling for the mission of the Church to engage with the socio-economic and political issues of society. He did not find that occurring in Pentecostalism in Chile and Pentecostalism in general.

Considering the explosive growth of Pentecostalism that occurred in the fourth quarter of the 20th century, Costas did not interact with it. The only other significant text written by Costas that referred to Pentecostalism was an article examining the ways minority churches functioned as places of survival and hope for Hispanics in the USA.⁶³ But during the past twenty-five years there has been a burst of research on the Pentecostal movement.⁶⁴

Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America

From April, 1974 until Spring, 1975, Costas undertook doctoral studies under the supervision of Johannes Verkuyl, chair of Mission and Evangelism in the Theological Faculty of the Free (Reformed) University of Amsterdam. Verkuyl had served as a missionary to Indonesia and then as Secretary of the Netherlands Missionary Council before assuming the academic post in the Free University. In a 1979 tribute to his mentor, Costas hon-

⁶² Ibid., 11.

⁶³ Orlando E. Costas, 'Sobrevivencia, esperanza y liberación en la iglesia hispana de Estados Unidos: Estudio de un caso,' *Vida y Pensamiento* 7 / Nos 1 y 2 (1987): 101-09. Costas told the story of a Black Puerto Rican in New York City whose life was transformed when he converted from crime to God as a result of attending worship services at an Hispanic Pentecostal church in New York City (102-04). The article was primarily on the life and mission of immigrant churches in the USA and secondarily about Pentecostalism.

⁶⁴ For discussion of Pentecostalism and missiology, see: Gary B McGee, 'Pentecostal Movement,' in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); idem, 'Pentecostal and Charismatic Missions,' in *Toward the 21st Century in Christian Mission*, ed. Philips and Coote (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1993), 41-53, esp. 42-44; Murray W. Dempster, *et al*, *Called and Empowered: Pentecostal Perspectives on Global Mission* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991); Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants / Context*, 272-74, 327-30.

For two examples of theological and ethical reflection from an Hispanic perspective, see: Samuel Sullivan, *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998); Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992).

oured Verkuyl as ‘a member of that prophetic minority in the “upperside” who has identified with the suffering and struggles of the “underside.”’⁶⁵ By ‘upperside’ Costas meant the privileged third of humanity ‘that has shaped the history of two thirds of humanity, profiting from its natural resources and cheap labor but failing to share with it its technological and scientific knowledge.’ Verkuyl exemplified for Costas Christians who followed Christ and stood in solidarity with the poor, powerless, and oppressed. Verkuyl was an example of a missiologist who reflected critically on the Church’s engagement with the socio-economic and political realities.

From this missiological orientation Costas researched the missiology of the historic Latin American Protestant churches between 1969 and 1974 with the intention of developing a contextual and holistic missiology.⁶⁶ Costas described the book as ‘both a reflection of and a response to the missiological process of contemporary Latin American Christianity.’⁶⁷ He reflected on the missiological process from the perspective of an active minister and missiologist. Furthermore the missiological thought arising from the Latin American Protestant Church during 1969 to 1974 demanded critical analysis. These were the reasons Costas gave for the book. He hoped that by closely examining the critical missiological issues of the day would help ‘map out a more relevant course of action’ by the Latin American Protestant churches.⁶⁸

Costas limited his missiological reflection to the missionary engagement of historic Latin American Protestantism.⁶⁹ His research, therefore, would focus on the ‘missiological trends stemming out of ecclesiastical bodies and socio-theological movements whose roots go back to the tradition of the Protestant Reformation.’ Costas’s methodology included three elements: an ‘inductive historico-theological analysis’ of significant written material coupled with a ‘critical deductive reading’ of the same texts; his own ‘critical observations as a participant-observer on the experience of being a ‘privileged actor’ in selected key events covered in the book; and the collection of critical observations of other participant-observers on key events covered in the book.’⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Orlando E. Costas, 'A Tribute from the Underside of History,' *Occasional Essays* 6 (1979): 4. Costas gave tribute upon Verkuyl’s retirement from his academic post in 1978. Costas further honoured his mentor by dedicating his *Compromiso y Misión* (1979) and its English edition, *The Integrity of Mission* (1979), to him.

⁶⁶ Orlando E. Costas, 'Mi itinerario teológico,' *Misión* 7:1 (1988): 12-3. Costas briefly described the main thrust of *Theology of the Crossroads*.

⁶⁷ Costas, *Theology Crossroads*, 22-3.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 25-6.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

Costas identified three ‘broad types of Protestantism’ in Latin America: Mainline, Evangelical, and Pentecostal.⁷¹ Pentecostalism shared much with Evangelicalism, but was distinguished by its affirmation of the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit and its various manifestations.⁷² Historic, Mainline Protestantism was chosen by Costas because it was the most active of the other two Protestant groups in promoting education, health, and social service projects in Latin America; it has been the most theologically influential of the three; and because it was the first group to recognize it was experiencing a crisis of mission.⁷³

In Part One of *Theology of the Crossroads* Costas prepared the ground for his study of historic Latin American Protestantism by defining missiology as the theology of the crossroads; surveying the three approaches to understanding Latin American Protestantism; identifying the social, economic, and political crossroads of the continent; and recognizing the Roman Catholic religious crossroads.⁷⁴

Costas was intentional in confining the research for the thesis to Mainline Protestantism. He explained that the churches of this group either maintained some degree of relationship with their counterparts in North America or Europe or participated in an organized ecumenical movement such as the World Council of Churches.⁷⁵

The Quest for Missiological Depth: Three Mainline Protestant Texts

Costas selected three missiological texts of three Latin American Mainline Protestant theological thinkers to illustrate the quest for missiological depth in the first half of the 1970s. He critically read selected missiological writings of:⁷⁶ Justo L. González, Emilio Castro, and Mortimer Arias.⁷⁷ These three authors were chosen because they were Latin

⁷¹ Ibid., 40.

⁷² Ibid., 47.

⁷³ Ibid., 50-5.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 7-82. For more on Costas’s theology of the crossroads, see chapter one of this thesis.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 47-50.

⁷⁶ Costas used the same critical methodology for each text: biographical information about the author; analysis of the historical context, structure, summary of content, and the author’s perspective; and an evaluation of positive and negative points. Costas gave special attention to missiological insights and implications for Latin American Protestant missiology in particular and missiology in general (ibid., 270). Costa’s methodology of critical engagement with texts was impressive and is useful as a template for critical interaction with missiological literature.

⁷⁷ Note the absence of prominent Argentinean Methodist theologian José Míguez Bonino (1924-) from Costa’s review. However Costas did recognize the significant contribution of Míguez Bonino to the discussion of Church unity in Latin America (ibid., 254-68). The Argentinean theologian’s insightful analyses of the state of Latin American Protestantism appeared throughout Costas’s study. Míguez Bonino has exhibited a pastoral concern for the poor and has been a leading Protestant proponent of liberation theology. He is widely known for his involvement in ecumenism, his participation in the World Council of Churches, his reflection on theological and political ethics, and his contribution to theological education (see: Pablo Pérez, ‘Míguez Bonino, José,’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000). Some of his

American mainline Protestants seeking to understand more fully the Church's mission in the crossroads of the continent.⁷⁸ First Costas evaluated González's *Historia de las Misiones* and its study of the missiological task from the perspective of the history of missions.⁷⁹ Then he examined Castro's *Hacia una Pastoral Latinoamericana* and its consideration of the missiological task from a pastoral perspective.⁸⁰ The chapter concluded with an analysis of Arias's *Salvación Es Liberación* and its biblical and systematic theology perspective on the Church's mission.⁸¹

Costas took seriously the critical evaluation of each book and its contribution to contemporary missiology. He identified the positive aspects of each book and pointed out negative aspects. The critical comments were not intended to undercut the positive contribution of the books but to interact with their arguments, clarify the issues, and call attention to what Costas believed was neglected by the authors. Costas's comments were 'thus offered in the spirit of a fellow traveller who shares the author's concern that Protestants understand more fully the meaning of their missionary vocation in the crossroads of contemporary Latin America.'⁸²

books that address Latin American Protestantism are: *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (1975), *Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution* (1976), and *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (1997). The only writing in which Costas critically engaged with anything of Míguez Bonino was a book review: Orlando E Costas, 'Beyond Confrontation: Review of *Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution*, by José Míguez-Bonino,' *The Reformed Journal* 26, no. 5 (1976).

⁷⁸ Hinted at in Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 284.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 270-92, on Justo L. González, *Historia de las Misiones*: (Buenos Aires La Aurora, 1970). González, a Methodist, was born and read theology in Cuba, received his PhD from Yale, pursued further research at the universities of Strassburg and Basel, taught at theological schools in Puerto Rico and the USA, served in the World Council of Churches (WCC), and has been 'widely recognized as a gifted historian and expert on the development of Christianity in the Caribbean' (Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 270-72).

⁸⁰ Ibid., 292-306 on: Emilio Castro, *Hacia una Pastoral Latinoamericana* (San José, Costa Rica: Publicaciones INDEF, 1974). Castro (b. 1927), an Uruguayan Methodist, served as pastor, missiologist, and ecumenical leader. He read theology at Union Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and studied under Karl Barth in Basel. Castro ministered to churches in Argentina, Bolivia, and Uruguay; was president of the Evangelical Church of Uruguay; held leadership positions in several Latin American Protestant organizations; directed the WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism; edited the *International Review of Missions*; was a general secretary of the WCC; and was editor of *Ecumenical Review*. He contributed to the formation of an indigenous Latin American pastoral theology and to the interpretation of mission for this era [Costas, *TheologyCrossroads* 292-3; Pablo Pérez, 'Castro, Emilio,' in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000)].

⁸¹ Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 306-22 on: Mortimer Arias, *Salvación Es Liberación: Reflexiones latinoamericanas en torno al temario de la Conferencia Ecuémica Salvación Hoy* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1973). Arias, a Bolivian Methodist, received degrees from Union Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the University of Birmingham (UK). He is known for numerous books on issues regarding the life and mission of the Church. He held numerous pastorates, taught philosophy and theology, served as a Methodist bishop, been involved in evangelism, laboured with the WCC, and worked cooperatively in ecumenical and missionary circles. He is also known for his work with the Indian population of Bolivia and for his contributions to the numerical growth of the Bolivian Methodist Church (Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 306-8).

⁸² Ibid., 284.

One of Costas's critical comments of González's book is an example of this. He commented that González did not go far enough to promote the Church's calling to stand in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, a basic conviction of Costas's missiology. Costas began his evaluation by affirming González's contribution. His book was, in Costas's view, 'without doubt one of the most significant works published by a Latin American Protestant during the period of our study. Its importance is eminently evident.'⁸³

But then Costas made a critical comment about González's perspective:

In the end, one cannot help but wonder whether the author has allowed himself to be truly confronted with the concrete, objective and global reality of the Third World in general and Latin America in particular: one questions to what extent he has succeeded in placing himself *inside* the world of the disenfranchised. How far have his own personal frustrations as a Cuban expatriate inhibited him from effectively identifying with the oppressive situation of the exploited masses of the world? And to what extent has his North American and European training kept him from looking at the history of Christianity from within the concrete situation of the oppressed majorities?⁸⁴

Costas later commented that González neglected to place his history of missions within a Latin American historico-cultural framework. Therefore the value of the book had been lessened. According to Costas: 'Christian history can be really meaningful if there is an awareness of the contemporary faith, its historico-cultural context and its praxeological engagement. To attempt to study the history of Christianity with any other frame of reference is to cripple its critical, dynamic potential.'⁸⁵

Outside the Gate

Costas presented a vision for the Church's mission in a sermon entitled 'Outside the Gate,' as an epilogue to his 1982 book *Christ Outside the Gate*.⁸⁶ He based his sermon on Hebrews 13:12 and summarized text as declaring that 'Jesus died outside the gate of Jerusalem and that he bore there the oppression of us all.'⁸⁷ This meant that the place of salvation was moved from Jerusalem, the centre, to outside the gate, the periphery.⁸⁸ *Outside the gate* was where the garbage was thrown and the devil dwelt. It was profane outside Jerusalem, but it was holy inside the city. Christ was crucified outside the city, on

⁸³ Ibid., 280-4.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 285.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 288.

⁸⁶ Costas, *ChristOG*, 188-94.

⁸⁷ Costas stated that this verse from Hebrews 13:12 'became very special' to him because the text called his attention to God's concern for those on the periphery (Costas, 'MissiologyUnderside,' 6).

⁸⁸ Costas, *ChristOG*, 188-89.

the periphery, 'among the scum' and 'leftovers' of life.⁸⁹ Jesus' death outside the gate was the result of God's commitment to those people who lived on the periphery.

Costas also interpreted the Hebrews text to establish that Jesus died to sanctify the people. Salvation meant that people were converted from living only for themselves to living to serve others, especially those who dwelt outside the gate. A true confession of faith is verified by a commitment to serve others, especially those outside the gate. Referring to Hebrews 12:15-6, Costas asserted that confession of Jesus' name meant sharing one's possessions with the poor and working for the general well-being of all.⁹⁰ Salvation meant being converted from selfishness to selflessness in service to others. Jesus called his followers to go out from the holy city, joining him on the periphery, and enduring the abuse that he endured.⁹¹ God calls the Church to go outside the gate to where Jesus Christ died and now stands with those on the periphery.

Costas acknowledged that '[f]ar too many Christians have interpreted God's salvation through Jesus Christ as a private possession, a personal privilege, rather than freedom for service.'⁹² They congregate at a type of church that is 'an exclusive fellowship, a club of "insiders".' This view of salvation is best observed in the phenomenon of Christendom. Christendom is a 'historical project' that is 'the vision of a society organized around Christian principles and values with the church as its manager or mentor.'⁹³ Salvation is administered to those who dwell *inside* the Church. But those who are *outside* the religious establishment are excluded from its benefits. According to the text in Hebrews, 'Jesus died "outside the gate," outside the religious compound, outside the comfort and security of the redeemed community.'⁹⁴ Salvation in Christ no longer meant blessings and privileges; it meant commitment to serve others outside the gate where Jesus suffered and died.

Costas equated *outside the gate* with the *periphery*. He viewed Christian mission as 'encountering the crucified Christ in the world of the outsiders and sharing in his suffering for the rejects and outcasts,...'⁹⁵ According to Costas, everything about the life and

⁸⁹ Ibid., 189.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 192-94. For articles and chapters by Costas referring to this theme, see: Orlando E. Costas, *¿Qué Significa Evangelizar Hoy?* (San José, Costa Rica: Publicaciones INDEF, 1973), 36; 'EvangelismLAC,' 59-60; 'A Radical Evangelical Contribution from Latin America,' in *Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism*, ed. Anderson and Stransky (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981), 141; 'Outside the Gate,' *Brethren Life and Thought* 27:2 (19-82): 91-5.

⁹² Costas, *ChristOG*, 189.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 190.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 192.

mission of the Church had to be done from the perspective of the periphery. Therefore, church planting, evangelism, church growth, worship, mission, and service only had 'Christian value if they are done "outside," in solidarity with the crucified Jesus and his permanent commitment to the outcast.'⁹⁶ Costas challenged North American Protestant churches as well as Latin American Protestant churches to join with the suffering and crucified Christ who even now dwells with the poor, powerless, and oppressed people who live on the periphery of life.

Critical Comments

The first significant theme of the writings covered in this chapter is Costas's insistence that the Latin American Protestant Church's mission engage with the brutal socio-economic and political realities of the continent. The Church is called by God to engage with situations of oppression, injustice, and poverty that were so pervasive throughout the continent. The foundation of Costas's missiology was his passionate commitment to join Christ in solidarity with the poor, marginalized, and powerless. Christ had suffered and died among them, and now dwells with them. By doing so, the Church would become a catalyst for the inevitable revolution in Latin America.

The second significant theme is the refusal of the Latin American Protestant Church to serve as a catalyst for the revolution that Costas expected. He found Protestant congregations that, for a variety of reasons, did not move out beyond the four walls of their church buildings. They did not engage with the socio-economic and political realities of a continent on the verge of revolution. Therefore the Latin American Protestant Church and the North American missionary enterprise evaded the gospel imperative to join Christ by standing with the poor, marginalized, and oppressed peoples in their struggle to construct a new world of peace and justice.

The third significant theme of this chapter, 'outside the gate,' is also the key concept of the chapter. The concept is Costas's expressive way of explaining the concept of the periphery that has such a prominent place in the development of his missiology. The poor, rejected, and outcasts do not dwell in the Holy City, but outside the City's gate. Jesus suffered and died outside the gate. Outside the gate is where Jesus now dwells among the powerless, oppressed, and suffering. Outside the gate is where Jesus has called the Church to come dwell with him and all those who dwell there. The Church's mission primarily takes place outside the gate.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 193.

Costas had examined the Latin American Protestant Church and diagnosed that she was closer to death than she was to life. She remained shut up in her holy huddles, refusing to engage with the socio-economic and political matters of a continent in a revolutionary situation. Costas prescribed that the Church follow Christ outside the gate to the people who dwell on the periphery of life. They are the people of the Third World who, for five hundred years, have not been given the means to control their own lives and destinies. There the Latin American Protestant Church would be healed as she participated with them to transform the world into one of peace and justice.

The way that Costas critically examined the Latin American Churches in the 1960s and 1970s set the pattern for the way that he later diagnosed other expressions of the mission of the Church. He would be assessing whether a church, a mission group, or a movement did or did not go out to those who lived outside the gate and out in the periphery. A major indicator of that was the extent to which a part of the Church engaged with the critical socio-economic and political issues of its respective society. These are the basic questions that Costas asked as he critically assessed different expressions of the Church's mission.

By means of the sermon 'Outside the Gate,' Costas clearly revealed the narrative that was shaping his missiology. Christ suffered and died outside the gate, on the periphery, and now dwells there with the rejected and outcast. He calls the Church to join him there among the poor, powerless, and oppressed. Those outside the gate are the vanguard of a new world of justice and peace. Costas's other writings are essentially variations of that narrative expressed in a variety of ways. Costas's writings exhibit Costas's singular commitment to stand in solidarity with those outside the gate. They are the people of the periphery, the Two Thirds World, and the Third World. They provided him with the perspective for every aspect of his missiology. This perspective dominates every aspect of his missiology.

The narrative of Israel in the wilderness as reflected in Psalm 106 offers a contrary perspective from that of Costas's 'outside the gate' narrative. Israel had been oppressed, enslaved, and in bondage in Egypt. In their captivity, the people of Israel were excluded from power and authority to determine their own lives and destiny. But Yahweh stood in solidarity with them and liberated them from slavery in Egypt. Yahweh led the Israelites into the wilderness, on the periphery of the ancient civilisations of the ancient Near East. In the wilderness, on the periphery, Israel showed herself to be unfaithful, disobedient, rebellious, hard-hearted, ungrateful, and constantly wandering away from God. She at-

tempted to go her own way and shape her own destiny. Psalm 106 portrays Yahweh standing in judgment against the people of Israel, not with them. The psalm's perspective is contrary to Costas's outside the gate perspective.

The people of Israel whom Yahweh had liberated from Egyptian oppression and made covenant with at Sinai repeatedly rebelled against their liberating God in order to worship other gods. This behaviour of Israel continued throughout her early settlement years in the land promised to her by Yahweh. Ancient Israel found herself in a back-water area on the periphery of mighty ancient Near Eastern civilisations. The book of Judges portrays Israel as poor and oppressed, exploited and dominated by a variety of peoples throughout the course of the book. She was subject to the power of other peoples and did not possess the power to determine her own destiny. In Judges 2:10-19 reveals the pattern of the whole book of Judges. Unfaithful Israel rejects Yahweh their liberator and serves foreign gods. In God's wrath, Yahweh delivers Israel into the hands of her enemies. As a result of domination and oppression, she cries out to God and repents and Yahweh liberates her from her enemies. This pattern recurs repeatedly in Israel's history, reaching its climax in Israel's exile.

Psalm 106 and Judges 2 present a different perspective on the periphery than that offered by Costas. The people that God had liberated from oppression and domination are characterised by constant unfaithfulness, disobedience, rebellion, and forgetfulness of all that God had done for them. They exhibit a radical inability to participate with God in the construction of a new world of peace and justice. There were times when God stood in solidarity with them, but times when God stood against them. It is actually a perspective of the periphery that is contrary to that of Costas. There is something more to God standing with people than they being poor and oppressed. This issue is addressed further on in the course of this thesis.

Costas was set on assessing the Church's mission and reading Scripture from the singular perspective of those who dwell outside the gate in the periphery. An example of this is his reading of Hebrews 13:12 in his sermon 'Outside the Gate.' In his other writings, Costas backed up his missiological arguments with what he referred to as 'scientific' exegesis, giving careful attention to the critical issues of grammar, lexical meanings, and literary and historical context. But in the published sermon, only the biblical background of sacrifice is offered to the hearer. Costas did not consider other critical exegetical issues of the text.

Costas ripped the Hebrews 13:12 text from its larger literary context, crammed his position on the periphery into it, and then passionately used the concept of ‘outside the gate’ to promote his missiology that was based on the mission of the Church going to those who dwell on the periphery. In doing so, He read the text in a way that disconnected it from the larger literary context of the epistle to the Hebrews and the Christian canon. Independently, Costas read forced an alien view into Hebrews 13:12. It may have made for a memorable sermon, but exegetically and homiletically, it was a misuse of the text.

Chapter Conclusions

Costas critically reflected on the Latin American Protestant Church’s mission in light of a continent in a revolutionary situation. He envisioned that the Protestant Church’s mission was to engage with the socio-economic and political realities of the continent in order to be a catalyst for revolution. But Costas’s assessment was that, in general, the Latin American Protestant Church failed to interact with a continent on the verge of revolution. He challenged the Church in the Americas to go outside the gate of the ecclesiastical compound to the periphery of the world. Outside the gate in the periphery is where the rejected and outcast dwell; where Christ suffered, died, and now dwells; and where Christ calls the Church to serve.

The narratives of Israel in the wilderness in Psalm 106 and in the early settlement in Canaan of Judges offer a contrary perspective concerning the periphery from that of Costas’s narrative of Christ outside the gate. Yahweh was on Israel’s side, liberated her from slavery in Egypt, and led them into the periphery. In the peripheries of the wilderness and the early settlement in Canaan, Israel repeatedly showed herself to be unfaithful, disobedient, wayward, and rebellious. In these situations, Yahweh was not on Israel’s side, but stood against her.

Although he never mentioned it, Costas could have been hearing a different message from ‘Amazing Grace’ than the one he had been hearing before. He might have seen the great hymn representing a significant number of Protestant Christians of the Americas who evaded engaging with the critical socio-economic and political issues of a continent in a revolutionary situation. Might he have considered ‘Amazing Grace’ was sentimental, pietistic, individualistic, or escapist? The song that expressed his Christian and missiological commitment was the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song because then he could sing of working with others to construct a new society of justice, peace, and love.

CHAPTER FOUR

Latin American Liberation Theology: Costas's Survey and Appraisal

In Latin American liberation theology Orlando Costas encountered a segment of the Church that engaged with a continent in an oppressive and unjust situation. This chapter explores his survey and appraisal of liberation theology (LT). First, it surveys three key liberation theologians, three general aspects of LT, and four redefined theological concepts selected by Costas. Second, it examines two challenges and five warnings regarding liberation theology. Finally, the chapter concludes with Costas's verdict on Latin American liberation theology.

Costas's Survey of Liberation Theology

LT arose amongst Latin American theologians reflecting critically on situations of oppression and injustice in Latin America and the rest of the Third World. Together with other Latin Americans, Christians committed themselves to the cause of liberation and the creation of a new society composed of a new humanity.¹ From Costas's perspective, the theology of liberation was important for two reasons: 1) it was an expression of Christians seeking justice for the oppressed, and 2) it was Christians struggling to find the meaning of salvation within an historical situation of oppression in Latin America, especially in the political sense.² In *The Church and Its Mission* Costas examined the LT from a missiological perspective.³

Costas's primary comment regarding the theology of liberation was that it is a thoroughly Latin American theology.⁴ He did not attribute the origin of the theology to one single person, although he did identify a number of Latin Americans who laid the foundations and contributed to its shape and direction. An already emerging LT gained

¹ Orlando E. Costas, *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1974), 219-20.

² Ibid., 220. Costas referred to the following to provide a concise summary of the historical development of the theology of liberation: Hugo Assmann, *Opresión-liberación: Desafío a los cristianos* (Montevideo: Tierra Nueva, 1971), 45-50, 79ff. For a more recent survey of the history of the LT, see: Roberto Oliveros, 'History of the Theology of Liberation,' in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ellacuria and Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 3-32.

³ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 219-64.

⁴ Ibid., 221-22.

momentum as a result of Roman Catholic reflection groups that sprang forth from the Latin America Episcopal Congress (CELAM) in Medellín, Colombia in 1968.

However, over the succeeding years several Protestants contributed to the development of liberation theology. Costas was influenced by the writings of Míguez-Bonino,⁵ and in the area of culture and society, by Julio de Santa Ana.⁶ Costas referred to Emilio Castro for his contributions to LT and pastoral concerns from a Protestant perspective.⁷ From this positive appreciation of the numerous voices that were contributing to the development of the theology of liberation, Costas focused his study on three theologians as key to the formation of Latin American LT: Rubem Alves, Hugo Assmann, and Gustavo Gutiérrez.⁸

Three Key Liberation Theologians

Costas described Rubem Alves, a Protestant, as the prophet of Latin American liberation theology.⁹ North American Harvey Cox and Latin American Assmann, both significant figures in the theological world of the last quarter of the twentieth century, recognized Alves's *Theology of Human Hope* as foundational in the development and promotion of LT. Costas highlighted Alves as being the first to articulate a distinctly Latin American theological expression to both the Church and the world.¹⁰

Costas identified Hugo Assmann as the apologist of the new movement, especially in his seminal *Opresión-Liberación: Desafío a los cristianos*.¹¹ He identified the roots of LT, defined the nature and meaning of liberation, promoted the theology of liberation as

⁵ The Argentinean theologian Míguez Bonino (1924-) has exhibited a pastoral concern for the poor and has been a leading Protestant proponent of liberation theology. He is widely known for his involvement in ecumenism, his participation in the World Council of Churches, his reflection on theological and political ethics, and his contribution to theological education (see: Pablo Pérez, 'Míguez Bonino, José,' in EDWM, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000). Even in the early 1970s Míguez-Bonino was a significant Latin American ecumenical Protestant theologian who had considerable theological impact well beyond his native land. Through his theological writings, he addressed such issues as: revolution, liberation, missiology, social transformation, being human, the Church and society, and social justice. For a select bibliography of Míguez Bonino's writings, see Secondary Sources.

⁶ For a select bibliography of De Santa Ana's writings, see Secondary Sources.

⁷ For a select bibliography of Castro's writings, see Secondary Sources. For Castro's influence on the development of the pastoral aspect in Costas's missiology, see chapter five in this thesis.

⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 222.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 22-3.

¹⁰ For a select bibliography of Alves's writings, see Secondary Sources.

¹¹ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 223. The book is: Hugo Assmann, *Opresión-Liberación: Desafío a los Cristianos* (in English: *Oppression-Liberation: A Challenge to Christians*). Assman was born in Brazil and served as a Jesuit priest in his homeland until he was expelled due to his political and social activities. He worked in Uruguay and Chile, was study secretary of the Movimiento de Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (ISAL), and worked as an assistant with Prof. J.B. Metz. He was a prolific writer who caught the attention of European theologians because of his critique of European theology (Johannes Verkuyl, *Contemporary Missiology*, trans. Cooper (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1978), 289.

a political theology, defended its methodology and locus, and critiqued North Atlantic theologies. According to Costas, Assmann was suspicious of the ideological presuppositions of North Atlantic theologies and critical of their vagueness. He further described his method as ‘using an admirable guerrilla-like approach’ by which Assmann ‘[set] up one roadblock after another to the “ethics of order,” and [built] a case for the theology of liberation as an autochthonous political theology based on an ‘ethic of change.’ Costas contended that Assmann identified some of the main elements of LT.¹²

Costas viewed Gustavo Gutiérrez as the systematic theologian of liberation theology.¹³ His first book, *Teología de la Liberación* (1972), wove non-theological insights with theological studies and biblical exegesis to develop the case for LT. Gutiérrez crafted a theological methodology that was not a repetition of Western theological concepts or a justification of the *status quo*, but a radically new theological system. Costas commented that ‘[o]ne might not always agree with him, but one cannot help but admire his sharp yet positive, syncretical yet open-ended, innovative yet historically-minded theological style.’¹⁴

Costas regarded Latin American liberation theology as a theological rebellion against the North Atlantic theologies.¹⁵ Latin American theologians exhibited a ‘rebellious character’ and made a radical break with the North Atlantic theological traditions. He viewed this theological break with North Atlantic theologies to be as significant as Karl Barth’s *Römerbrief* bringing about the break with nineteenth-century theological liberalism and Jürgen Moltmann’s *Theology of Hope* opening up a new theological direction different from that of Barth.

Three Significant Aspects of Liberation Theology

Costas highlighted three significant aspects of the new Latin American theological movement.¹⁶ First, the LT generally began from a starting point different from the North Atlantic theologies. Whereas North Atlantic theologians usually started from such theological categories as God, Church, sin, and world, Latin American theologians began with the historical reality of Latin America; oppression, poverty, injustice, and death.

¹² For a select bibliography of Assmann’s writings, see Secondary Sources.

¹³ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 223. Gutiérrez (1928-) was born in Peru; studied medicine, psychology, and theology in Lima, Louvain, and Rome; and received a doctorate in theology from the University of Lyons. He founded and directed the Instituto Bartolomé de las Casas. He now teaches at universities around the world.

¹⁴ For a select bibliography of Gutiérrez’s writings, see Secondary Sources.

¹⁵ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 223-227. For Costas ‘North Atlantic’ referred to Western Europe and North America.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 224-27.

Assmann commented that ‘the greatest merit of the “theology of liberation” probably lies in its insistence on the historical starting point of its reflection: the dominated situation of Latin America.’¹⁷

Second, Latin Americans realised that this situation of injustice and oppression was not the norm and thus they committed themselves to changing the present historical reality.¹⁸ Moreover Costas noted that Christians were committing themselves to ‘the historical battleground in solidarity with the masses.’ Out of this context emerged the theology of liberation.¹⁹ Theology was no longer merely a rational or spiritual knowledge of the faith, but ‘critical reflection on the historical praxis of faith.’²⁰ LT was a different way of doing theology because it dealt with faith issues arising in concrete historical situations rather than from abstract theological categories. Gutiérrez wrote:

the theology of liberation offers us not so much a new theme for reflection as a new way to do theology. Theology as critical reflection on historical praxis is a liberating theology, a theology of the liberating transformation of the history of mankind and also therefore that part of mankind—gathered into *ecclesia*—which openly confesses Christ. This is a theology which does not stop with reflecting on the world, but rather tries to be part of the process through which the world was transformed. It is a theology which is open—in the protest against the plunder of the vast majority of people, in liberating love, and in the building of a new, just, and fraternal society...²¹

Third, Latin American liberation employed different tools from those employed by North Atlantic theologies.²² Because LT was critical reflection on the praxis of faith, reflection was preceded by analysis of the Christian’s socio-political context. The social sciences were thus the primary means for gathering concrete data from the historical praxis of Christians. They were necessary for analysing the present historical context and for understanding the scriptures. The social sciences were ‘the fundamental frame of reference and contextual starting point of the theology of liberation.’²³

The use of the social sciences in theological reflection raised the issue of the role ideology played in the analyses of human political and economic issues.²⁴ Liberation theologians rejected a North American commitment to the theory of economic and political

¹⁷ Ibid., 224 citing: Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 24.

¹⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 224-25., 224-25. Costas referred to Alves, *TheologyHope*, 11ff.

¹⁹ Costas’s observation and comment arose from his reading of Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 31ff.

²⁰ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 225.

²¹ Ibid., citing Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973), 15.

²² Costas, *ChurchIM*, 225-27.

²³ Ibid., 226, summarizing Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 65-7.

²⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 226-27.

developmentalism and the functionalistic analytical tools used to support it.²⁵ Therefore functionalism was used to support the *status quo* and promote the agenda, values, and priorities of the established order.²⁶ There was not any concern for critiquing the established order or for seeking the welfare for those outside the establishment.

In contrast to functionalism, liberation theologians reflected theologically on historical praxis based on their solidarity with the poor and oppressed.²⁷ Realizing there was no scientific methodology that was ideologically free, liberation theologians used a structuralistic methodology for socio-economic analysis that evaluated the *status quo* from the perspective of a commitment to the poor and oppressed, from which it identified the root causes of injustice and dependency, critiqued the current system, and struggled for the liberation of the masses from all forms of oppression and dependency. Unlike functionalism, structuralism could not tolerate things remaining the same and therefore worked to change the structures of the system.

A Critique of North Atlantic Theologies

Costas presented a short critique of selected North Atlantic theologies.²⁸ From the perspective of theologians standing in solidarity with the poor, the theologies emerging from the affluent North Atlantic regions were irrelevant and unsatisfactory. Liberation theology criticized theologies of secularisation because they were optimistic about technology and, being uncritical of it, failed to see that it was an ideology of alienation.²⁹ LT was also critical of the radical subjectivity, the privatisation of faith, and the separation of hope from politics that characterized the existential theologies of Kierkegaard, Bultmann, and the latter's disciples.³⁰

Furthermore, Alves and other liberation theologians rejected Barthian neo-Orthodoxy because they perceived that it promoted an otherworldly and utterly transcendent concept of God that did nothing to change the world.³¹ They had committed themselves to the historical project of creating a new future for humanity. Alves assessed Barthian neo-

²⁵ For Costas's short explanation of the developmental theory and the functionalistic use of social analytical tools, see: *ibid.*, 226.

²⁶ *Ibid.* Costas referring to: Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*(1973), 21ff.

²⁷ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 227.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 227-31.

²⁹ Some of the representative titles Costas listed are: Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: Macmillan, 1965); Robert L. Richard, *Secularization Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967); R. Adolphs, *La Tumba de Dios* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Carlos Lohlé, 1967). For more commentary on secularisation theology from a liberation perspective, see: Alves, *TheologyHope*, 21-7.

³⁰ For more on LT view of existential theology, see: *Ibid.*, 34, 43.

³¹ For Alves's developed critique of Barth and Neo-Orthodoxy from a liberation theology perspective, see: *ibid.*, 44-55.

Orthodoxy and found it did not contribute anything to this task. The idea of a transcendent God led not only to the notion that God was not engaged with the world, but also that God was against the world. His diagnosis was that neo-Orthodoxy ‘could not, as a consequence, allow for the creation of a new tomorrow. It rather brought history to its end.’³² Alves concluded that he and other liberation theologians ‘need[ed] to proceed in their search for a language appropriate to their historical project and to their condition as members of the community of faith.’³³ Barth and neo-Orthodoxy were going in the opposite direction than that of Alves and LT.

Other North Atlantic theologies were scrutinized by LT.³⁴ Even though LT had much in common with theology of revolution there were critical differences. Costas noted a perception by North Atlantic Christians that theology of revolution was conceived in Latin America and exported to the West. Assmann commented that the theology of revolution reflected more of the affluent West than of Latin America. The theology of revolution remained in the theological realm whereas LT harnessed social sciences to execute what needed to be done for liberation from oppression. Theology alone could not accomplish that; only the social sciences could.³⁵

Of the North Atlantic theologies that Costas reviewed, the political theologies of Johannes Baptist Metz and Jürgen Moltmann were the most influential on LT.³⁶ Costas noted that liberation theology viewed itself as a Latin American expression of political theology because of the latter’s rejection of classical political theology, especially its categories of State and citizen. Liberation theologians appreciated that political theology promoted the political dimensions of the faith, challenged theological individualism, introduced a new political vocabulary for theological reflection, called the institutional Church to critique society, recovered the subversive nature of the faith, and acknowledged hopes still unfulfilled. But political theology was criticized for failing to identify the mechanisms of domination and to couple theology to ethical politics.

³² Ibid., 54.

³³ Ibid., 55.

³⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 229-31.

³⁵ For more on Assmann’s position, see: Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 112.

³⁶ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 229-30, summarised: Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 13-4, 116-7. Two theological works were important to LT: Johannes Baptist Metz, *Zur Theologie der Welt* (München y Mainz: Mathias-Grünenwalt-Verlag y Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1968); Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

Costas acknowledged that Moltmann's *Theology of Hope* significantly influenced the theology of liberation.³⁷ But Moltmann's starting point for theology was the future based on promises that had little impact on the present whereas liberation theologians insisted that the starting point was the present human condition and the need to negate it in the present. Assmann warned that Moltmann's theology could lead a person to be a mere spectator in history and Gutierrez was concerned that the theology of hope would be so future-bound that present unjust situations and struggles for liberation would be neglected.³⁸

A Latin American Missiology

After surveying the North Atlantic theologies Costas focused on the issue of dependency. He noted that for centuries Latin America had been the largest Christian area of poverty in the world. But why was it so dependent on the affluent developed world for everything, even for its theology and missiology?³⁹ 'Why is it that after more than 400 years of Christianity only now an indigenous theological school begins to emerge? Why is it that the Latin American church is still dependent on the North Atlantic church for the supply of a heavy number of its missionary task force and its participating so little in the missionary task of the Church in other parts of the world?' Costas identified dependency as a key issue for Latin American theological reflection.

Costas argued that Latin American liberation theology emerged as Christians reflected theologically on the historical reality of dependency on the continent.⁴⁰ Furthermore, LT coupled dependency with liberation and viewed the Latin American Church being part of this process. Because LT was viewed as critical reflection on historical praxis, it evaluated the Church's mission from the reality of the dependency-liberation issues of the continent. Costas described LT as more than a critique of current theologies from the affluent North Atlantic region, but also 'a radical reflection on the mission-liberation issue.'⁴¹

³⁷ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 230-31. Costas three representatives of LT acknowledged Moltmann's impact: Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 119ff; Alves, *TheologyHope*, 55ff; Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation(1973)*, 217ff.

³⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 231, referring to: Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 80; Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation-(1973)*, 218.

³⁹ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 231.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 232.

A Redefinition of Theological Concepts

Because of its reflection on the mission-liberation issue in the Latin American context, liberation theology redefined the theological concepts of salvation, Christology, eschatology, and the Church.⁴²

First, Costas considered Gutiérrez's position on liberation and salvation.⁴³ Because salvation was the central theme to the Christian 'mystery,' liberation theology reflected on 'the relationship between salvation and the process of man throughout history.' Furthermore the qualitative aspect of salvation was more important than the quantitative.⁴⁴ This has two results: 1) the presence of God's grace to Christian and non-Christian alike, and 2) a rejection of any other - worldly aspect of salvation. Salvation was 'the communion of men with God and the communion of men among themselves.' Salvation takes place in history with the transformation of all humanity.⁴⁵

Gutiérrez emphasised the identification and promotion of the political liberation aspect of salvation.⁴⁶ This political aspect of salvation was based on the exodus of Israel from bondage as a political event. Furthermore, political liberation meant the 'self-creation' of humanity.⁴⁷ The Exodus event illustrated the political liberation of humanity that witnessed to 'the recovery of man's God-given creative nature which, when properly exercised, makes him the subject instead of the object of his own history.'⁴⁸

This political understanding of salvation caught Costas's attention and he delved further into Gutiérrez's position.⁴⁹ Costas understood Gutiérrez and LT to be interested primarily in the relationship in history between salvation and human liberation. They sought to establish just human communities and communion of humanity with God. To this end, the Exodus event was 'a political act, in which Israel is liberated from the bondage of oppression.' Salvation was understood in terms of political liberation. Through that event God set ancient Israel free to construct a just society and to proclaim God's liberating acts to all peoples.

⁴² Ibid., 232-40.

⁴³ Ibid., 132-34 referring to: Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*(1973), 149-60.

⁴⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 152. The qualitative aspect was interested in such concerns as the value of human life, with the measure of God's grace with humanity, and the significance of human action in history. The quantitative aspect was concerned with the number of people saved and the Church's part in number.

⁴⁵ Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*(1973), 153.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 155.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 155ff.

⁴⁸ Costas's words from Costas, *ChurchIM*, 234, based on his reading of: Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*-(1973), 157.

⁴⁹ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 232-234.

Gutiérrez presented the work of Christ as the fulfilment of the pattern of political liberation established by the Exodus event.⁵⁰ Through Christ, God liberates humanity from sin and all its consequences in order that they may build a world of justice, peace, and fraternity.⁵¹ Costas summed up political liberation of humanity as ‘the recovery of man’s God-given creative nature which, when properly exercised, makes him the subject instead of the object of his own history.’⁵² That Gutiérrez and LT viewed salvation as political liberation meant that they were committed to the transformation of human reality and against anything that distorted or stood in the way of that transforming engagement.

Second, Costas examined Gutiérrez’s understanding of Christology and history.⁵³ Gutiérrez viewed Christ in historical categories just as he considered salvation in historical terms. Christ was the incarnation of the Word and the ‘historization’ of God. Gutiérrez wrote that in Christ ‘the particular is transcended and the universal becomes concrete. In him, in his incarnation, what is personal and internal becomes visible. Henceforth, this will be true, in one way or another, of everyman.’⁵⁴ God was to be found in every woman and man. Therefore, Gutiérrez wrote, we meet God ‘in our encounter with men; we encounter him in the commitment to the historical process of mankind.’⁵⁵ In light of this, Assmann understood conversion in historical terms. He wrote: ‘The conversion to the God of the kingdom has to be materialized in the conversion of the historical human process.’⁵⁶ To be converted to God and God’s kingdom was to be converted to humanity and human history.⁵⁷

Third, Costas turned his attention to an issue of the relationship between history and eschatology: the tension between the ‘now’ and the ‘not yet’ of God’s kingdom.⁵⁸ The kingdom was manifested in the concrete historical struggles of liberation, yet it remained distant, awaiting its coming in fullness into history. Assmann wrote of it as ‘a horizon always open before us.’⁵⁹ Gutiérrez stated that the ‘not yet’ aspect of the kingdom was always ahead of us and prevented us from absolutising any stage or human endeavour in history. It kept the future open and full of possibilities.⁶⁰ Alves followed in the same line,

⁵⁰ Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation* (1973), 158.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁵² Costas, *ChurchIM*, 234.

⁵³ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 234-35.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 235 citing from: Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*(1973), 193.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 194, cited by: Costas, *ChurchIM*, 235.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, citing: Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 155.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 156. Assmann referred to the Last Judgment passage in Matthew 25.

⁵⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 235-37.

⁵⁹ Assmann, *OpresiónLiberación*, 154.

⁶⁰ Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*(1973), 233.

describing the tension as: ‘The now was the time when a liberating activity that pushed toward the future was going on.’⁶¹ Costas recognized that LT promoted

an open, unqualified eschatology that arises out of the present and concrete historical struggles. God’s future is in the present, but only as “hope and promise, for God’s kingdom is, likewise, present in the now, but not in its perfect form. But if the present cannot mediate God’s kingdom in its absoluteness, neither can the future reveal its final definitive character. The future kingdom exists, in other words, to the extent that there is hope, and hope can only emerge from the now, from one’s commitment to historical praxis.”⁶²

Fourth, Costas surveyed liberation theology’s position on the Church and her mission.⁶³ Liberation theologians affirmed that the Church was a means to an end and not an end in herself. Gutiérrez, agreeing with Vatican II, viewed the Church as a sacrament of salvation that pointed beyond herself to salvation.⁶⁴ According to Gutiérrez, this had three implications: 1) ‘the church must be a place of liberation in her concrete existence;’⁶⁵ 2) the Church had a provisional character that was ‘oriented toward the reality of the kingdom of God, present in history in God’s liberating action among men;’ and 3) the Church was not to be understood in spatial terms, but in dynamic terms of mission. In regards to this third point, Costas stated: ‘the church is, therefore, mission, a responsive community to God’s actions, always *in via*, pointing through her existence to the reality of salvation in history.’⁶⁶ The mission of the Church was expressed in at least three ways: celebration, denunciation, and annunciation.⁶⁷

Costas concluded the section on the Church and her mission with a brief look at LT’s view of evangelisation.⁶⁸ He interpreted LT as viewing evangelisation as exposing injustice wherever it was present because it was contrary to the gospel. Therefore the function of proclamation of the gospel was political.⁶⁹ Gutiérrez expressed his view that commitment to liberation and solidarity with the poor were essential components of LT’s view of evangelisation. He wrote that evangelisation was:

made real and meaningful only by living and announcing the Gospel from within a commitment to liberation, only in concrete, effective solidarity with people and ex-

⁶¹ Alves, *TheologyHope*, 95-6.

⁶² Costas, *ChurchIM*, 237.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 237-40.

⁶⁴ Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation(1973)*, 237.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 261.

⁶⁷ Costas briefly expanded on his comments of the three in: Costas, *ChurchIM*, 238.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 239-40.

⁶⁹ Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation(1973)*, 269.

ploited social classes. Only by participating in their struggles can we understand the implications of the Gospel message and make it have an impact on history.⁷⁰

An Appraisal of Latin American Liberation Theology

After having reviewed three basic themes of a liberation missiology presented in texts of three selected liberation theologians, Costas evaluated the themes ‘in terms of their own internal arguments, in the light of our understanding of the scriptures and the reality of the church’s missionary praxis.’⁷¹ In the appraisal section of his survey of LT in *The Church and Its Mission* Costas expressed both his positive and negative issues.⁷² It is also important to recognise that Costas expressed his concerns as one who was at least familiar with the concerns of evangelicals.⁷³

Liberation Theology’s Challenge to Missiology

Costas declared that liberation theology ‘poses a tremendous challenge to contemporary missiology.’⁷⁴ As the first of two challenges, LT insisted that the ‘concrete historical situation’ was ‘a necessary starting point’ to missiology.⁷⁵ Costas recognised this assertion was ‘perhaps the greatest merit of the theology of liberation—and its greatest challenge for the theology of mission.’ It especially disputed any missiology that would not commit itself politically or not take seriously the concrete historical situation.

Costas recognised that liberation theology’s insistence on faith’s political aspect and its commitment to do theological reflection from a concrete historical context did two things: it dismantled ideologies that supported the *status quo* and uncovered an underlying docetic tendency in current missiology.⁷⁶ The docetic view resulted in Christian mission that did not engage with historical reality. LT critiqued the docetic view that Costas recognised as underlying much of current missiological reflection.

As a result of his opposition to docetic tendencies in Christian missions, Costas affirmed LT’s insistence that missionary activity be expressed through political involve-

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 240.

⁷² Ibid., 240-64.

⁷³ Ibid., 240-41.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 240.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 241.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 241. The term *docetic* refers to a theological perspective that began in the early Church and continues to this day. It denies the reality of Jesus’ humanity and views it as imaginary. It was based on the premise that if Jesus Christ suffered and died on the cross he was not God; and if Jesus was divine, he could not have suffered on the cross. This became a central tenet among Gnostics and was countered by the Council of Chalcedon’s affirmation that Jesus Christ was ‘truly God and truly man’ [G.L Borchert, ‘Docetism,’ in *EDT*, ed. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984)].

ment in concrete historical situations.⁷⁷ He argued that biblical faith was anchored in history. This was especially recognised in the political implications of the Incarnation. Jesus never became involved in political parties or movements. However,

the fact that he was the Word of God made flesh; the fact that he was the incarnation of truth; the fact that he claimed to give meaning to history: all these made his presence in Palestine a unique political event, because it challenged the universal pretensions of the Roman Empire. Thus, while avoiding involvement in party politics, Jesus nevertheless took a political position. He relativised the authority of the Empire and of any earthly kingdom by underlining their temporal character and their corrupt moral nature.⁷⁸

Jesus chose a political option that led him to challenge the imperial authority of the Roman Empire.

Furthermore, Jesus' political option meant that he sided with the poor and not with the rich and powerful. The word 'poor' stood for all people who had no one to stand up for them. Jesus proclaimed that he had been anointed by God to 'proclaim good news to the poor and liberty to the captives, to bring sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord' (Luke 4:18-19). As a servant who stood on the side of the poor, he humbled himself, became powerless, and chose death upon a cross.⁷⁹ By doing so he stood at the side of all who suffer 'spiritually, socially, economically, politically, and culturally.'

Because Costas was an evangelical missiologist he took seriously the authority of the scriptures, he was challenged by liberation theologians in regards to missiology. He wrote:

Therefore, when the theologians of liberation insist on the political dimensions of the gospel and on the necessity of theologizing out of commitment to the concrete historical situation of the downtrodden, they are in fact calling us, at *this one point*, back to the heart of biblical theology. They are challenging us to evaluate the political perspective of our missiology. Is it a justification for a system of domination and oppression, or is it an outgrowth of commitment to the well being of man in obedience to the God who demands justice, who at the cross took the side of the weak and destitute and commands his people to follow his example?⁸⁰

Liberation theologians challenged missiologists to evaluate current missiologies to assess whether they reflect the essential nature of biblical theology and its political orientation and theology based on commitment to the historical reality of the poor and the oppressed.

⁷⁷ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 241-46.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 242-43.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 244-45.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 245.

Costas then addressed the North Atlantic missionary enterprise.⁸¹ When it was assessed from the political perspective of the gospel, the enterprise was often seen as a ‘justification and a cover for the domination of people.’⁸² It was a common understanding that ‘the expansionistic ambitions of militarily and economically powerful countries have always been accompanied by missionary interest.’⁸³ Costas recognised in the present day a powerful alliance between global business interests and the missionary enterprise.

Costas perceived that LT would challenge the missionary enterprise to be founded on a theology that reflected a ‘serious commitment to mankind in its many situations.’⁸⁴ Such a missiology would be characterised by ‘unfeigned love, faith that acts, and creative hope.’ The missionary enterprise was to exhibit an unfeigned love that was ‘sincere and completely committed to others.’⁸⁵ Second, a faith that acts was ‘willing to do *anything* that *Jesus* would do for *man*.’⁸⁶ It was a ‘faith incarnated in the life struggles of people.’ In regards to this, Costas forcefully addressed evangelicals: ‘It is time we evangelicals start sounding off on the imperative of *orthopraxis*, instead of spending all our time defending right doctrine.’ Costas argued that orthodoxy only occurred when Christians lived out ‘serious, loving, all out commitment to God *and* man.’⁸⁷ Third, a missiology characterized by ‘dynamic, creative hope’ ‘would serve as catalyst to open up horizons

⁸¹ Ibid., 245-49.

⁸² Ibid., 245.

⁸³ Ibid. For more on this connection with a focus on Anglo-American Protestant missions in the 19th and 20th centuries, see: A. N. Porter, *Religion versus Empire?: British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester / New York: Manchester University Press, 2004); Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990); Rubén Lores, ‘Manifest Destiny and the Missionary Enterprise,’ *Study Encounter* XI, no. 1 (1975); Frederick Merk and Kerm Lois Bannister, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1995); Norman Etherington, *Missions and Empire* (Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); James G. Greenlee and Charles Murray Johnston, *Good Citizens: British Missionaries and Imperial States, 1870-1918* (Montreal / Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); Reeva S. Simon and Eleanor Tejerian, *Altruism and Imperialism: Western Cultural and Religious Missions in the Middle East* (New York: Middle East Institute, Columbia University, 2002).

⁸⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 246.

⁸⁵ Ibid. Costas further stated: ‘It must be a love verified by concrete acts of solidarity with all men in their historical struggles.’ In keeping with the main ideas of the section, he added: ‘We need a theology of mission characterized by the praxis of unconditional love toward people in their concrete historical situation.’

⁸⁶ Ibid., 247. Italicised words are in the Costas text.

⁸⁷ Ibid. Italicised words are in the Costas text. Costas referred to Jacob Spener and the Pietist movement as examples of Christians keeping together orthodoxy and orthopraxis. Spener (1635-1705) was the key figure in the Pietist movement, especially through his book, *Pia desideria*. By means of the book he envisioned the transformation of society through personal conversion and the renewal of the Church. Spener and the Pietists reacted against frigid Lutheran orthodoxy. Their lives exemplified what Costas was calling evangelicals to do: keep orthodoxy and orthopraxis together in equal measure. The Pietists were also the pioneers of the Protestant missionary movement. For more on the Pietist movement, see: Paul E Pierson, ‘Pietism,’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

filled with unlimited possibilities for the kingdom of God' and 'be an incentive to action in present struggles.'⁸⁸

A Second Challenge Regarding Service, Salvation, and the Church

Costas was challenged by liberation theology's understanding of service from the perspective of salvation.⁸⁹ LT defined service resulting from salvation in terms of liberation and solidarity. 'In other words,' Costas wrote, 'to be saved is to be free to stand in solidarity with one's neighbor and to participate with him in his struggle for liberation.'⁹⁰ He argued that this view was contrary to the common view of service as something a person does for someone else. LT did not view salvation as a gift or possession, but as a responsibility. Those who were saved were set apart for service of standing with others in need and participating with them in the struggle for justice. In line with biblical witness, doing justice was evidence of knowing God.⁹¹

At this point Costas was highlighting LT's emphasis on salvation as service rather than as a gift or possession, and again recognising its perspective on salvation as political liberation. Costas appreciated LT's negative critique of a form of Christianity that believed that salvation was a personal gift, a private possession, a prize won, or a ticket to heaven.⁹² From LT's point of view, this produced deformed Christian believers who were passive because they had nothing to struggle for in this life. They were merely objects of God acting in their own lives and failing to take responsibility for creating a new and just world.

But as it has been seen above in this chapter, LT proclaimed salvation as political liberation and called men and women to service on behalf of the transformation of human reality. Salvation was not something that a person received from God, but a responsibility that challenged a person to action for justice and liberation. Therefore the stress was placed on the active voice rather than the passive, on transformation rather than merely receiving, on being subjects who shape their own history rather than objects of oppres-

⁸⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 247. Such an eschatological orientation would hinder the evangelical tendency towards other-worldliness. This dynamic and creative hope would prepare evangelicals to see 'a present pregnant with hope and a future that activates the present.'

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 249-50.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 250.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* In order to support this point Costas gave the following biblical examples of one's salvation being expressed through standing with other people in need: the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luk.10:30ff.); the judgment of the sheep and the goats (Mat. 25:31ff.); Jesus' new commandment that his disciples love one another (John 13:31ff); and James's insistence that faith without works is dead (Jas. 14ff).

⁹² *Ibid.*, 249.

sion and injustice. Salvation is not so much something a person receives for free as that which sets a person free in order to serve the cause of justice.

Costas was also challenged by LT's concept of the Church as a being a showcase for salvation and a demonstration of liberation.⁹³ He imagined such a Church challenged by LT's view of the Church:

What a difference it would make if the church, instead of transmitting a gospel of repression, subjugation, and alienation, as she has often done, would communicate a liberating gospel which restores people to their humanity, puts them on the road to creativity, and involves them in the struggle for justice and peace! What a difference it would make if national churches, local congregations, and missionary societies, instead of producing lopsided congregations subjugated to the *status quo* and engaged in the proclamation of salvation as a ticket to heaven, would plant liberated communities of believers who relate the claims and demands of the gospel to their concrete historical situation and work toward a more just and humane society! The worship of such congregations would be a celebration of the triumph of the gospel in their particular culture and historical struggles. Their evangelistic endeavors would turn out to be acts of liberation.⁹⁴

Costas's imaginative view of the Church contested Marx's view of religion as the opiate of the people.

Five Warnings

Costas appreciated the way that liberation theology addressed the First World missionary enterprise. He described LT as 'a tremendous weapon in the hands of the Third World vis-à-vis the rich affluent world of the North Atlantic.'⁹⁵ But he warned:

while the emergence of the theology of liberation constitutes one of the greatest contemporary challenges to the missionary enterprise, it also poses some dangers and a warning to those of us from the Third World who may be attracted by its commitment to the struggles for social justice and its sharp biblical, theological, and missiological insights.

Costas then issued five warnings about Latin American liberation theology.⁹⁶

A Situational Hermeneutic

Costas's first warning dealt with the issues of the authority of Scripture and hermeneutics.⁹⁷ Liberation theology's primary point of reference for doing theological reflection was the concrete historical situation. This primary point of reference, according to Costas, was LT's greatest contribution and asset, and yet it was also its greatest drawback.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 251.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 250-64.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 251-53.

Because liberation theology was understood as critical reflection on historical praxis in the present, the concrete historical situation became the primary and normative text in which theological reflection was grounded.

Costas did acknowledge that Scripture played a part in LT's process of theological reflection, but he was concerned that it was only a minor part. He maintained that both Scripture and the concrete historical situation were the primary frames of reference for doing theology as 'critical reflection on the present historical praxis.'⁹⁸ Costas contended that LT relegated Scripture—along with Christian tradition, Church teaching, and history of Christian doctrine—to a secondary position in theological reflection. The concrete historical situation, therefore, was 'the only normative element in the hermeneutics of the theology of liberation.'⁹⁹

Because he was committed to a liberation hermeneutic, Costas did accept the concrete historical situation as a primary frame of reference for doing theology. But as an evangelical who affirmed the evangelical tenet of the authority of Scripture, he asserted that Scripture was also a primary frame of reference for doing theology. Even though Costas recognised that Scripture did have a function in LT, it was 'only a comparative, descriptive function.'¹⁰⁰ The historical situation alone was the norm in LT theological reflection. Everything else, including Scripture, was secondary.

Without Scripture as a norm, Costas was concerned that LT was not able to maintain itself within the context of the Christian faith, thus falling into theological syncretism.¹⁰¹ The only way to prevent this from happening was to elevate Scripture to the level of concrete historical situations as the two norms for LT theological reflection. The scriptures were necessary to preserve the distinctiveness of the Christian faith in any theologising:

Only a hermeneutic that takes seriously the authority of the Word of Christ mediated through the witnessing presence of the Holy Spirit can assume the preservation of the distinctiveness of the Christian faith. Without the norm of Scripture (the canon), the Christian faith runs the risk of losing itself in the concrete situation or emerging out of it amalgamated with other non-Christian ideas.¹⁰²

A Spirit-emptied Christology

The second danger Costas identified with liberation theology was 'the absence of a doctrine of the Holy Spirit' and 'a Spirit-emptied Christology.'¹⁰³ Not only was there no

⁹⁸ Ibid., 251.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 252.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 253-55, at 253.

place for the Spirit in the interpretation of the Scriptures, but liberation Christology was ‘virtu-ally empty’ of any mention of the Spirit.¹⁰⁴ He also was concerned that Jesus Christ was known only by one’s encounter with him in the neighbour. According to Costas, to speak of encountering Christ through one’s neighbour without the mediation of the Spirit was to meet a Christ who was not real.

Costas argued that the neighbour alone could not mediate Christ, but that the Spirit alone mediated Christ through the neighbour.¹⁰⁵ The neighbour was not the only way that one encountered Christ. The Spirit also revealed Christ through the scriptures and the sacraments. Only by means of the Spirit of Christ could Jesus Christ and the scriptures be understood. Neither a Spirit-emptied Christ nor a Christ-emptied Bible could be understood. Costas called it a fallacy that Christ could be made present through humans without the mediation of the Spirit. He argued that Christ was made present only by means of the Spirit, but the Spirit made him present through the neighbour, the scriptures, and the sacraments.

An Anthropocentric Theology

The third danger Costas identified was the anthropocentric orientation of liberation theology.¹⁰⁶ According to Costas, this was the result of the *locus* of theology being in the praxis of men and women in history. Christ was defined in human terms as the one who was present in the neighbour. Furthermore, the Church dwelt in the world of humanity and salvation was liberation from all that hindered humankind from bringing in a new world. He quoted Gutiérrez who wrote that theology was ‘man’s critical reflection on himself, on his own basic principles.’¹⁰⁷

Costas interacted with how Alves handled the doctrine of grace.¹⁰⁸ He was concerned that Alves’s heavy emphasis on an anthropological orientation of theology had ‘a definite

¹⁰⁴ Since Costas wrote this critique on the Spirit and liberation theology, José Comblin contributed reflection on the Spirit and liberation. See: Joseph Comblin, *Tiempo de Acción: Ensayo sobre el Espíritu y la Historia* (Lima, Perú / Iquitos, Perú: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones / Centro de Estudios Teológicos de la Amazonia, 1986); *El Espíritu Santo y la Liberación* (Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1987); *The Holy Spirit and Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989); ‘The Holy Spirit,’ in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ellacuría and Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 462-82. The relationship between theology of the Spirit and liberation theology in Comblin and Costas was the topic in the following PhD thesis: Mark R McClellan, ‘Pneumatology and Liberation in Latin America: An Analysis of the Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Theologies of Orlando E. Costas and José Comblin’ (PhD thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000).

¹⁰⁵ Costas brought up the possibility that the anti-Christ, not Christ, would be present in the neighbour. For example, the neighbour may be an oppressor who is also oppressed, but fails to acknowledge it.

¹⁰⁶ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 255-57.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 255, citing from: Gutiérrez, *TheologyLiberation*(1973), 11.

¹⁰⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 255-57, on: Alves, *TheologyHope*, 136, 142-44.

effect on the Christian doctrine of grace.’ Costas noticed that even though Alves, a Protestant, argued salvation was an act of grace, Alves still contended God needed humans to work for the future.¹⁰⁹ Costas’s problem with Alves was that God was dependent upon humanity in order to get anything done in the world. The divine became so historicized that the sense of God’s transcendence disappeared. Costas read Alves to mean that grace was reduced to an initial act of salvation in a person’s life and God was limited to being a partner in the human work of creating the future.¹¹⁰

Based on his understanding of the scriptures, Costas contended that God did not need humans to do God’s work, and yet God called women and men to be co-workers in God’s work.¹¹¹ He also pointed out that humanity’s calling to be God’s co-worker was both a privilege and an obligation. Humans were created by God to find fulfilment by working with God. When God was honoured as God and humanity took its rightful place, then work was both an expression of worship and service to others. Even though God and humanity were co-workers, God was *the Worker* and humanity continuously needed God’s grace to carry out the work of new creation.¹¹²

A Qualitatively Defined Salvation

The fourth danger that Costas identified was that the theology of liberation expressed ‘a qualitatively defined salvation.’¹¹³ This meant, according to Costas, that liberation theology promoted ‘an absolute universalistic salvation.’ He explained that universalistic salvation view believed that all people were saved, whether they recognised it or not. The primary question was not who was saved, but whether people acknowledged the reality of salvation and joined God’s new creation work.

Costas recognised two sides of the gospel: one side was positive and declared God’s mercy and grace and the postponement of divine wrath; the other was negative and presented God’s final judgment as postponed, but not cancelled. He argued that the gospel always called women and men to repentance. Based on his reading of scriptural passages

¹⁰⁹ Costas diagnosed this as ‘a sophisticated new form of Pelagianism.’ Costas understood Pelagianism to acknowledge the human need of God’s grace for the forgiveness of sins, but not for life thereafter. There was no need for grace because one would have the ability to do everything by oneself. Costas based his comments on: Paul Tillich, *A Complete History of Christian Thought*, ed. Braaten (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 125.

¹¹⁰ At this point Costas cited Gutiérrez, *Theology of Liberation* (1973), 159-60. He did not comment further on this citation. But the context would suggest that Costas read Gutiérrez to mean that grace freed humanity to work for a better future.

¹¹¹ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 257.

¹¹² Costas was stating that humanity was appointed, authorized, and empowered by the Sovereign God to govern creation as God’s representative.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 257-60.

that witnessed to the reality of God's pending judgment and the call to repentance, Costas could not understand liberation theology's affirmation of universal salvation.¹¹⁴

Therefore Costas took seriously the biblical commands to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the world and to call people to repent from their sin and live the new life in Christ.¹¹⁵ He affirmed two fundamental reasons for the Church's mission: first, the moral and existential lostness of the human race and, secondly, the abundant redeeming mercy and love of the God who was also the judge of all. Mission reflected the tension between the reality of the lostness of the human race and that of the God who reached out to humanity. The gospels portrayed mission as an imperative and the Church's identity as anchored in this divinely given imperative. The Church could do no other than be obedient to and act upon this command.

Costas was critical of what he called the 'absolute universalism' of the theology of liberation.¹¹⁶ That theological perspective distorted what he felt was the seriousness of the New Testament positions on the lostness of humankind, the availability of salvation to men and women, and God's initiative to bring salvation to them. Furthermore, liberation theology disregarded the New Testament's clear warnings about the tragic consequences of human unbelief and the reality of divine judgment.¹¹⁷

An Unqualified Open Future

The fifth danger that Costas recognised was that liberation theology expressed 'an unqualified open future that was vague.'¹¹⁸ This was the result of holding to a 'now and not yet' eschatological position that viewed the coming kingdom in some ways present, but in other ways always out of reach and ahead of us in the future. Liberation theologians, Costas argued, were 'so committed to an absolutely open future that they wind up in vagueness and generalities.' He suggested that the vagueness was because LT drew hope only from the present and not from the future. It was based on a view of God grounded in the reality of the Incarnation: that God walked among the people and was leading humankind towards a future in the making. But as true as the Incarnation was, Costas argued that LT ignored the resurrection and the apocalyptic future. It affirmed a prophetic future

¹¹⁴ Costas recognized the judgment theme in most of the sermons recorded in Acts. Moreover, John referred to the reality of judgment on all who did not believe and the Apostle Paul declared that the wrath of God fell upon all those who did not obey the gospel (2Thess. 1:8).

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 259.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ For more current discussion of selected themes in this section, see: Juan Ramón Moreno, 'Evangelization,' in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ellacuría and Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 564-80; José Ignacio González Faus, 'Sin', in *ibid.*, 532-42.

¹¹⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 260-63.

that propelled the present into the future but neglected an apocalyptic future irruption into the present from the future. The two views of the future were meant to be complementary to one another and conjoined. The result of stressing one aspect over the other was vagueness of the aspect neglected.

Costas found support for both the prophetic future and apocalyptic future perspectives in the New Testament.¹¹⁹ The former perspective found its greatest expression in the doctrine of the Incarnation, the doctrine that affirmed that God became human. The pattern of Jesus' self-emptying, especially as seen in his passion on the cross, was a powerful aspect of this position.¹²⁰ God's liberating power expressed at the cross of Christ propelled the present into the reality of God's future. On the other hand, the best example of the apocalyptic future was the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead when the future surged into the present. These two eschatological perspectives of the future were coupled together by the Spirit. The Spirit of Promise has been moving throughout history and throughout the world, making Christ present in the concrete historical contexts of human life.¹²¹

Costas used the perspective of the Book of Revelation to clarify his views on the theological themes of eschatology, history, and God's kingdom.¹²² He interpreted history as the presence of God's not-yet-in-its-fullness kingdom that negated the present and moved towards the future. The chief characteristic of God's kingdom was *shalom*: the state of wholeness of human life; the reconciliation of men and women with themselves, with others, with God, and with creation; and the restored relationship between creation and the Creator God. As a result of God's liberating work among them, men and women would be free to live life to the fullest. What humanity now only experienced in part would become a complete reality when the fullness of God's kingdom comes.

Costas also argued that the fullness of God's kingdom would be revealed and established *in* history even though it would come from *outside* history.¹²³ The Book of Revela-

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 261.

¹²⁰ *Kenosis*, a Greek word employed in Phil. 2:7, refers to Jesus Christ emptying himself and taking on human form. There is a wide range of interpretations as to what this meant (for further information, see: S.M. Smith, 'Kenosis, Kenotic Theology,' in *EDT*, ed. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1994).

¹²¹ Costas saw the two future perspectives together in John's Book of Revelation. John was enduring suffering on the Isle of Patmos on account of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Costas interpreted John's being caught up in the Spirit as a vivid example of the future surging into John's present. John witnessed the future and, as a result, was enabled to gain perspective on his present circumstances. This so strengthened him that so that he could endure and not despair. Costas portrayed John saying *no* to the present world and thus being able to work for God's coming kingdom. John was taken into the future so that he was empowered to serve in the present.

¹²² Costas, *ChurchIM*, 262.

¹²³ Ibid., 262-63.

tion did not envision an end to history, but a transformation and renewal of it when God's kingdom comes in fullness. Therefore, Costas added, there was no excuse for escapism from the affairs of the world. He interpreted John's cry, 'Amen, come Lord Jesus,' as a cry of faith and hope that was to be translated into committed action. God would be present with God's people in the struggles of life.

Costas's Cautious Note

After surveying the challenges and warnings on Latin American liberation theology, Costas offered his concluding assessment.¹²⁴ He took seriously Latin American liberation theology's challenge to the Church, especially the North Atlantic Church, to stand in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. The theological priorities of its liberation-mission orientation confronted the Church to make her missiology relevant to a world seeking liberation. However, in terms of the overall direction of LT, Costas concluded: 'the price that a mission-minded and biblically oriented Christian must pay is too high.' But despite this warning, Costas urged evangelicals to face the challenges put forth by the theology of liberation.¹²⁵

The writings of Costas reflect a steady engagement with the concerns and issues voiced by the emergence of Latin American liberation theology, especially in the 1970s, and the further expression of liberation issues in other liberation theologies. Even to this

¹²⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 263. For other evangelical assessments of LT from Latin America, see: Emilio Antonio Nuñez C., *Liberation Theology*, trans. Sywulka (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985); J. Andrew Kirk, *Liberation Theology: An Evangelical View from the Third World* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1979); C. René Padilla, 'Una nueva manera de hacer teología,' *Misión* 1:1 (1982); idem, 'La teología de la liberación: una evaluación crítica,' *Misión* 1:2 (1982); Emilio A. Nuñez C. and William D. Taylor, *Crisis in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 233-81; Samuel Escobar, *La Fe Evangélica y las Teologías de la Liberación* (El Paso, TX: Casa Bautista de Publicaciones, 1987). For other assessments, see: Craig L. Nessel, *Orthopraxis or Heresy: The North American Theological Response to Latin American Liberation Theology* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); Arthur McGovern, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989).

¹²⁵ Costas interacted with LT. Along with his main engagement with it in: Costas, *ChurchIM*, 219-64; he also engaged with it in: Costas, *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology in Mainline Protestantism, 1969-1974* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi NV, 1976), 69-77; *The Integrity of Mission: The Inner Life and Outreach of the Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), 61-75; *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982), 117-34; 'The Subversiveness of Faith: Esther as a Paradigm for a Liberating Theology,' *Ecumenical Review* 40 (1988): 67, 73-5, 78; 'Liberation Theology in the Americas: Common Journeys and Mutual Challenges,' in *Yearning to Breathe Free: Liberation Theologies in the United States*, ed. Mar, Forcey and Hunter (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990), 28-44; 'The Subversiveness of Faith: A Paradigm for Doing Liberation Theology,' in *Doing Theology in Today's World*, ed. Woodbridge and McComiskey (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 377-96. For a study of how other evangelicals interacted with liberation themes, see: Sharon Elizabeth Heaney, 'Contextual Theology for Latin America: Liberation Themes in Evangelical Perspective (Orlando E. Costas, Samuel Escobar, J. Andrew Kirk, Emilio A. Nuñez, C. René Padilla),' [PhD thesis, Queen's University of Belfast (United Kingdom), 2004].

day Latin American liberation theology continues to challenge the Church and her mission.¹²⁶

Critical Comments

Costas had been highly critical of the Latin American Church and the North Atlantic missionary enterprise because they did not engage with the critical socio-economic and political issues of Latin America. Even though the concept of outside the gate was not expressed in writing or in preaching until the early 1980s, Costas must have had some anticipatory thoughts about that in the mid 1970s. In Latin American liberation theology, Costas found a missiology that engaged with the critical issues of a continent in a revolutionary situation. Although he might not have formulated it as such, he found a theological methodology of the Church's mission outside the gate. LT was theological reflection focused on the poor, powerless, and oppressed people of the Third World / Two Thirds World / and the periphery.

The first of three key concepts from this chapter on LT is LT's assertion that the concrete historical situation is the starting point missiology. Costas called this the greatest benefit and challenge coming out of LT. LT is theological reflection on the struggle for liberation in concrete situations in Latin America. In contrast to the Latin American Protestant churches, it engaged in the historical reality of Latin America and addressed the socio-economic and political issues in a continent on the brink of revolution. LT is the sign that the Church has taken seriously the concrete historical situation of Latin America and committed herself to the struggle for liberation. The result is that the Church's mission is grounded in historical reality.

¹²⁶ For a variety of perspectives on Latin American liberation theology in particular and liberation theology in various other expressions, see: Mario I. Aguilar, *Current Issues on Theology and Religion in Latin America and Africa* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 23-58; Manfred K. Bahmann, *A Preference for the Poor: Latin American Liberation Theology from a Protestant Perspective* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005); David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 432-47; Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino, eds., *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), (the whole book is useful, but esp. chaps. 1 & 2); Alfred T. Hennelly, ed., *Liberation Theology: A Documentary History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990); Ivan Petrella, *Latin American Liberation Theology: The Next Generation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005); Pablo Richard and Carmelo Alvarez, *Raíces de la Teología Latinoamericana: Nuevos materiales para la historia de la teología*, 2a ed. (San José, Costa Rica: CEHILA: Departamento Ecuménico de Investigaciones, 1987); Pablo Richard, *Fuerza Ética y Espiritual de la Teología de la Liberación en el Contexto Actual de la Globalización* (San José, Costa Rica: Departamento Ecuménico de Investigación, 2004); David Tombs, *Latin American Liberation Theology* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002); Pablo Richard and team, 'Challenges to Liberation Theology in the Decade of the Nineties,' in *New Face of the Church in Latin America*, ed. Cook (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 245-58.

The second key concept of LT, the political aspect of salvation, is an implication of the first key concept, the concrete historical situation. For the Church to engage with the concrete historical situation, the Church must engage in the political aspect of the gospel. Jesus Christ stands on the side of the poor, not the rich and powerful. He stands with all who suffer socially, economically, politically, and culturally. Christ calls the Church to stand with him in solidarity with the poor, powerless, and oppressed. In the Exodus event, Israel was set free to construct a new and just society. Salvation, then and now, takes place in history and sets a course for the transformation of society. Through Christ, God liberates humanity from sin and all its consequences to build a new world of peace and justice. Humanity is no longer the object of history, but the subject of history. Salvation / liberation means being committed to the historical project of creating the new society.

The third key concept is LT's call for solidarity and service as an implication of salvation / liberation. Costas appreciated two challenges of LT: the concept of the concrete historical situation and this call for solidarity and service. Salvation / liberation is not a gift that one keeps to one's self, but a call to stand in solidarity with those who suffer and struggle for justice. It is orthopraxis as much as it is orthodoxy. It makes humanity active in transforming its future rather than being solely acted upon. Women and men are now the subjects of their own history. Salvation means standing in solidarity with one's neighbour and participating with the neighbour in his or her struggle for liberation. It leads people to stand with others in need and not keep it for one's self.

Costas's evangelical heritage and convictions are reflected throughout *The Church and Its Mission*, the book in which the survey and appraisal of LT were included. The book was a collection of lectures given in 1973 at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, an established evangelical graduate divinity school in the USA, and published by Tyndale House Publishers, a prominent North American publisher of evangelical literature. Costas presented his evangelical credentials in the book's introduction. In the concluding section of the chapter on LT, he encouraged fellow evangelicals to face the challenges posed by LT, but then added a cautionary note. As a Christian believer who focused on mission and affirmed the authority of the Bible—both suggesting evangelical tenets, Costas could not whole-heartedly endorse LT. He critically assessed LT from an evangelical perspective, identifying both challenges and concerns. Even though the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song put in words the direction in which he was going, he still heard the words of 'Amazing Grace!' In the early 1970s, Costas was beginning to formu-

late a different expression of evangelicalism. There is more about that in chapters six and eight of this thesis.

Psalm 106 provides a perspective that is useful in assessing Costas's critical evaluation of LT. He confessed that he was a biblically oriented Christian. Both LT and Costas identified with the strong liberation motif of the exodus of ancient Israel from bondage in Egypt. Israel is set free in order to construct a new society of peace and justice. The narrative of Israel in the wilderness as found in Psalm 106, however, portrays liberated Israel as rebellious, disobedient, and unfaithful. But in the Israel liberation narrative heralded by Costas and LT, Israel hurdles this view of Israel and enters the battle for the transformation of human history. But from the perspective of Psalm 106, Israel is an utter failure as an agent of transformation.

From the perspective of Psalm 106, Israel's critical issues in her concrete historical situation in the wilderness is not the result of exterior forces of oppression, domination, and exploitation, but of her constant rebellion against Yahweh, her liberator. She sets out to go her own way and determine her own history. But Israel is shown to be radically unable to construct a just society of peace and proclaim God's liberating power to the peoples of the world. This narrative of Israel in the narrative is repeated in different variations throughout the biblical history of Israel and the Church. Costas had described himself as a biblically oriented Christian, but nowhere in his missiological writings does he consider the narrative of Israel in the wilderness as presented in Psalm 106.

Chapter Conclusions

Costas surveyed and assessed LT as an evangelical. Although he did not totally endorse LT because of his evangelical convictions, there identified aspects of LT that challenged evangelical missiology. He highlighted LT's insistence that theologising be done out of commitment to the concrete historical situation of the poor and the oppressed, and that mission be expressed through political engagement in concrete historical situations. LT was an example to him of Christians going outside the gates into a continent in a revolutionary situation. Christians were engaging with the socio-economic and political realities of the Third World / Two Thirds World / and periphery. Costas focused his attention on the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song, but he was still paying attention to 'Amazing Grace!'

CHAPTER FIVE

***La Pastoral:* The Pastoral Shape of Costas's Missiology**

Costas's writings, especially those that are autobiographical, reflect his missiological view that the Church and her mission must be involved in all aspects of people's lives. Especially during his ministry in Milwaukee, Costas moulded a missiology that expressed a pastoral concern for all aspects of human life and faith. The purpose of this chapter is to explore how *la pastoral* was expressed in Costas's missiology.¹ The chapter begins with a brief review of Costas's surveys of Latin American Roman Catholic and Protestant pastoral missiologies. Most of this chapter, however, explores attempts by Costas and other evangelical Protestants to contribute to a Latin American pastoral missiology.

Latin American Roman Catholic Pastoral Missiology

Costas discovered that the source of the renewed commitment to the pastoral aspect of missiology grew out of the founding of el Instituto Pastoral Latinoamericano (IPLA) in 1960.² IPLA was formed to respond to what was perceived to be a pastoral crisis in the Latin American Roman Catholic Church. Costas commented: 'A passage can thus be witnessed in the 60's from a pastoral theology oriented toward the preservation and maintenance of the church as a social institution to one which is oriented toward mission.'³ This new orientation was 'initiated from within the concrete reality of Latin American Catholicism, but supported theologically by the insights of Vatican II and the shared theological experience of the hierarchy during the Council.'

¹ In several articles and reports in Spanish, Costas referred to *la pastoral* as a noun. There is no equivalent noun in English. *La pastoral* is most often used in English as an adjective: *pastoral theology*, *pastoral ministry*, *pastoral activity*, *pastoral concern*, *pastoral aspect*, *pastoral dimension*, and *pastoral orientation*. They all refer to *la pastoral*; but *la pastoral* has a larger field of meaning that includes all these senses. Therefore, *la pastoral* is left untranslated in this chapter.

² Orlando E. Costas, 'Missiology in Contemporary Latin America: A Survey,' in *Missions and Theological Education in World Perspective*, ed. Conn and Rowen (Farmington, MI: Associates of Urbanus, 1984), 87. In English, IPLA refers to: the Latin American Pastoral Institute. It was founded as a department of CELAM (Conferencia Episcopal Latinoamericana). In English, CELAM stands for the Latin American Episcopal Conference (Roman Catholic).

³ Ibid., 87-9. Costas especially recognised this trend in two significant books: C. Floristan and José María Estepa, *Pastoral de Hoy* (Barcelona: Editorial Nova Terra, 1966); Segundo Galilea, *Hacia una Pastoral Vernácula* (Barcelona: Editorial Nova Terra, 1966).

Thus the pastoral-theological orientation of missiology incorporated into its portfolio all those activities that sought 'to communicate the gospel in the multiple situations of society.'⁴ The 'pastoral' aspect was defined as:

the specific action of the Christian community or church, insofar as it communicates to the world the Christian message of salvation. The delivery of the message—with all its implications and demands—is 'pastoral' in the measure that it is guided by Revelation, the orientation of the church and the reality of man.⁵

Costas observed the connection between the pastoral aspect and mission, and then concluded: 'it becomes quite obvious that the pastoral-theological movement is fundamentally a form of missiological reflection.'⁶ IPLA and other publishers published literature that promoted missiological reflection on such topics as evangelisation, popular religiosity, and pastoral action in the face of socio-cultural and political issues of the continent.⁷

Latin American Protestant Pastoral Missiology

Costas discovered that Latin American Protestants had also initiated their own pastoral-theological movement in the early 1970s.⁸ Emilio Castro and his *Hacia una Pastoral Latinoamericana* (1974) was the most well known representative of this movement.⁹ Costas commented: 'His book constitutes not only a significant step in the development of an autochthonous Latin American Protestant pastoral theology but also a unique moment in the reflection on the meaning of mission in contemporary Latin America.'¹⁰

The book is a collection of lectures delivered in San José, Costa Rica, in 1972.¹¹ In the first three chapters Castro presented the theological foundations for a Latin American

⁴ Costas, 'Missiology / Contemporary (1984),' 93.

⁵ Ibid., citing from: Segundo Galilea, ed., *Información Teológica y Pastoral sobre América Latina* (Bogotá: Secretariado General de la CLAR, 1974), 144.

⁶ Costas, 'Missiology / Contemporary (1984),' 93-4.

⁷ Some of the authors and their works selected by Costas: Rafael Ávila, *Elementos para una Evangelización Liberadora* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sigueme, 1971); Segundo Galilea, *Evangelización en América Latina* (Quito, Ecuador: IPLA, 1970); *Reflexiones sobre la Evangelización* (Quito, Ecuador: IPLA, 1970); *Espiritualidad y Renovación Pastoral* (Quito: IPLA, 1969); Carlos Álvarez Calderón, *Pastoral y Liberación Humana* (Quito: IPLA, 1969); Rafael P. Ávila, *Teología, Evangelización y Liberación* (Bogotá: Ediciones Paulinas, 1973); Juan Luis Segundo, *Acción Pastoral Latinoamericana: Sus motivos ocultos* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Busqueda, 1972).

⁸ Costas, 'Missiology / Contemporary (1984),' 104.

⁹ Emilio Castro, *Hacia una Pastoral Latinoamericana* (San José, Costa Rica: Publicaciones INDEF, 1974). Costas identified Castro as a significant contributor to the formation of an indigenous Latin American pastoral theology and to the meaning of mission in this era [Orlando E. Costas, *Theology of the Crossroads in Contemporary Latin America: Missiology at the Crossroads in Mainline Protestantism, 1969-1974* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi NV, 1976), 292-3; Pablo Pérez, 'Castro, Emilio,' in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000)]. Costas's respect for Castro's missiology is evident in: Orlando E. Costas, 'The Missiological Thought of Emilio Castro,' *International Review of Mission* 73 (1984): 86-97.

¹⁰ Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 292.

¹¹ In *ibid.*, 293-96 Costas presented the occasion and the context surrounding the lectures.

pastoral theology. In the next four chapters he formulated pastoral practices on worship, evangelisation, and pastoral care.¹² Costas pronounced the book a milestone because it highlighted a 'fundamental maxim' that 'the effective participation of the church in God's mission in the world is contingent upon the development of an effective pastoral leadership.'¹³ Castro offered a pastoral model of missiology to the Protestant Church in Latin America.

In 1973 Costas addressed the need for an evangelical pastoral theology for Latin America.¹⁴ In an essay that called attention to the lack of a Latin American Protestant pastoral ministry model, he lamented that most Latin American Protestant pastors and churches neglected pastoral work or viewed it as a secondary concern.¹⁵

Costas criticised the Latin American Protestant Church's extensive use of pastoral models imported from the North Atlantic Church.¹⁶ He was especially concerned about models that stressed a professional and church-centred pastoral orientation that were overpowering in the Latin American Protestant pastoral ethos. In contrast were the Latin American-contextualised writings of Segundo Galilea, a Roman Catholic, and Castro, an ecumenical Protestant.¹⁷ Latin American Catholics developed a '*pastoral perspective of the social responsibility of the church*' that was shaped for the Church in a revolutionary situation.¹⁸

¹² In *ibid.*, 296-302 Costas summarized the book, and from 302-06 he evaluated it.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 306.

¹⁴ Regarding Costas's use of 'evangelical' ('evangélica' in Spanish) in the context of Latin American pastoral theology, it is not clear whether he used it to refer to Protestantism in general or evangelical Protestantism. Based on my reading of the word's use in his literary corpus and the general context, I conclude it refers to Protestantism in general. Yet it was a Protestantism that neither confined itself to ecumenical Protestantism nor excluded evangelical Protestantism. He encouraged cooperative dialogue and mission with the other branches of Protestantism. Costas first presented his vision of a Protestant pastoral theology for Latin America at the Second Consultation on Evangelical Social Ethics that convened in Quito, Ecuador, in December, 1973. The essay was later published as: Orlando E Costas, 'Hacia una pastoral evangélica para el hombre latinoamericano,' in *El Protestantismo en América Latina Hoy: Ensayos del camino (1972-1974)* (San José, Costa Rica: Publicaciones INDEF, 1975), 77-113. He referred to it as the most significant essay in that collection [Orlando E. Costas, 'Teólogo en la encrucijada,' in *Hacia una Teología Evangélica Latinoamericana*, ed. Padilla (San José: Editorial Caribe, 1984), 28].

¹⁵ As explained by Costas in: Costas, 'Teólogo,' 28.

¹⁶ Costas, 'Hacia Pastoral Evangélica,' 79. By the 'North Atlantic Church,' Costas meant the Church in North America and Western Europe, the traditional missionary-sending countries.

¹⁷ Segundo Galilea was born and grew up in Chile, and taught at the Pastoral Institute in Quito, Ecuador. Johannes Verkuyl recognized Galilea as a 'creative writer' in missiology and pastoral theology, and acknowledged his 1971 book, *The Pastoral Situation in Latin America* (Johannes Verkuyl, *Contemporary Missiology*, trans. Cooper (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1978), 290). For a select bibliography of Galilea's writings, see Secondary Sources.

¹⁸ Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 343. The italicised words are in the text.

A Social Pastoral Theology

Costas proposed a 'social pastoral theology' that would 'take seriously the pastoral character of the church, the concrete situation of the Latin American peoples, the heritage of the Reformation of the 16th-century and the Latin American evangelical tradition.'¹⁹ He envisioned pastoral ministry practiced outside the local congregation as well as inside it. Using missiological terms Costas defined pastoral activity as the 'the practical expression of the mission with a double dimension: to the interior of the church, with the end of renewing her, and outside her, in order to help her to be incarnated in the society and to contribute to its integral transformation.'²⁰

In a key essay Costas laid the foundation for a Latin American evangelical Protestant pastoral theology.²¹ One of its aims was to reflect pastorally on the Church's responsibility to seek social justice.²² The Church was given the mandate to seek the neighbour's welfare as well as her own. Costas noted that there was considerable Christian social action occurring throughout the continent. But there was a lack of 'critical pastoral reflection over the significance of this action in the socio-economic, political and cultural context of Latin American.'²³ He called for Christian pastoral reflection to analyse the mission of the Church as she carried out this task. The purpose of *la pastoral* was to introduce the Gospel into every area of life, from the intimate and personal to the social, economic, political, and cultural.

The point of reference for pastoral theology, according to Costas, was neither the Church, nor the individual, nor society, but Jesus Christ: 'Only in and through Christ are we able to work *theologically* (and therefore pastorally) with humankind.'²⁴ Not only was there pastoral commitment to people in the Church, but also 'a pastoral commitment of the church for the Latin American people.'²⁵ Therefore this pastoral aspect applied as much to the mission of the Church as the life of the Church.

Christ and the Concrete Historical Situation

Costas recognised that the foundation of the Church's pastoral reflection was the presence of Christ's Spirit in concrete historical situations.²⁶ Only in those situations did the

¹⁹ My translation of : Costas, 'Teólogo,' 28.

²⁰ My translation of *ibid.*, 29.

²¹ Costas, 'Hacia pastoral evangélica,' in *ProtestantismoALHoy*, 77-113.

²² *Ibid.*, 85.

²³ My translation of *ibid.*

²⁴ My translation of *ibid.*, 86.

²⁵ My translation of *ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

Church encounter the flesh and blood reality of humanity. Only by committing herself to Jesus Christ could the Church discover her life, purpose, and mission; only by the Church committing herself to humanity would humanity discover what it meant to be human. Costas envisioned that the Church's mission to Latin Americans would be focused through the pastoral aspect, anchored in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Costas examined the pastoral orientation in terms of interconnections between people and the Church.²⁷ Because the Church was part of human society (but not identical with it), there was constant variation of multiple relationships between the persons and the Church. Wherever there was some aspect of the Church present in society there was interaction of people with her. The task of the pastoral perspective, Costas wrote, was to consider 'the problem' of 'the quality and intensity of this interaction.'²⁸

Costas also looked at the pastoral aspect from a christological perspective by the concept of the 'Spirit-filled Christ.'²⁹ By using this concept he was attempting to connect Christology with pastoral concerns in a Latin America, thus making the Spirit Christ 'the criteria of verification in the pastoral situation.'³⁰ The Christ, who was Jesus of Nazareth and the Word made flesh, was made present among the peoples through the Spirit. The Good Shepherd of the Psalms and Prophets and the Suffering Servant of the prophet Isaiah were incarnated in Jesus Christ. His humanity in history expressed his commitment to humanity and became the lens and the criteria for a pastoral posture oriented to the Latin American people.³¹

Costas's Proposal for a Pastoral Missiology

Costas proposed a specifically Latin American evangelical pastoral missiology.³² First, pastoral activity would be executed in reference to God's mission. In other words, it would be carried out and evaluated from a missiological perspective. In Costas's view, the mission of God was the foundation of the pastoral aspect of missiology. Because God was at work in the world, there was always a need for critical pastoral reflection on the

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ My translation of *ibid.*

²⁹ Ibid. My translation of: 'Cristo pneumático.' Other options considered were: the *Spirit of Christ* and the *spiritual Christ*. However none of the three options carried the appropriate sense of the Spanish text. The sense of the paragraph in which Costas referred to the Spirit Christ was more oriented to the humanity of Jesus Christ as the point of contact between God and humanity than about the Spirit nature of Christ. There is no certain sense about how this paragraph is to be understood.

³⁰ My translation of *ibid.*

³¹ Ibid., 87-8.

³² Ibid., 89-92.

quality of the Church's mission to the world.³³ There would not have been the need of a pastoral aspect if God had not been a missionary God.³⁴ Therefore Costas contended that 'biblical faith presents God as a missionary God *who acts pastorally* in history.'³⁵

Costas cited biblical references that presented God active throughout history and creation as a shepherd (pastor).³⁶ The Old Testament employed the Semitic understanding of shepherding to portray God in shepherding terms: God provided for, protected, and led God's people. In the New Testament Jesus reflected this Good Shepherd nature of God.³⁷ The combination of God's pastoral role and God's missionary character was evident in the life and mission of Jesus Christ. Costas pointed out that a key view of God in the scriptures was of God as a pastoral missionary God.³⁸ God had been at work throughout history to redeem people. God was the Great Shepherd who gathered lost and wandering people into God's flock.

Pastoral Missiology and the Triune Nature of God

Costas combined the view of the triune nature of the missionary God with shepherding vocabulary.³⁹ The Father sent the Son on a mission that had a pastoral, or shepherding, aspect to it: the Son's mission was to give his life for the lost sheep. Then both the Father and the Son sent the Spirit to continue with the Son's shepherding mission. The Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—sent out the Church, the community of faith, to continue the pastoral ministry of the Triune God in the world. Costas placed this pastoral aspect of the Church's mission within the theological context of the Triune God.

³³ Costas contended that both Roman Catholic and Protestant North Atlantic pastoral theologies 'had seen missiology as an appendix, at the most a chapter, of pastoral theology' (my translation of *ibid.*, 89). Missiology, therefore, was considered a subdivision of practical theology.

³⁴ *Ibid.* Costas referred to several Old Testament passages about the shepherding character of God: God was the sovereign Shepherd (Gen. 48; Ps. 34); the land and all that it produces, and the world and all its inhabitants are God's (Ps. 24:1); God took care of God's people just as a shepherd took care of his sheep (Ps. 100:3); Israel was called to be a missionary (Ex. 19:5,6) and pilgrim (Ps. 23) people, sent out by God to be a light to the nations (Is. 42:6,7); one aspect of Israel's calling was to act as under-shepherds who served the Great Shepherd (Ez. 34:2ff.); and God was the Great Shepherd who gave God's life for God's sheep (Zech. 13:7).

³⁵ My translation of *ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.* This Semitic understanding viewed the shepherd as a person who cared for, guided, and protected a flock of sheep. In the Bible this understanding of the human shepherd was applied to God as shepherd. In Spanish the word *pastor* is used to refer to both the person who cares for sheep as well as the person in a church who cares for people. In English, the person who cares for sheep is referred to as a shepherd whereas the person who cares for people is a pastor, but carrying the sense of what a shepherd does.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 90. Jesus cares for, protects, leads, and gives his life for the sheep (Jn. 10).

³⁸ *Ibid.* Costas wrote that God is 'un misionero pastoral,' or literally, a 'pastoral missionary'.

³⁹ *Ibid.* Regarding the Father and Son sending the Holy Spirit, see: Jn. 14:26; 16:7. The Spirit was sent in order to teach, guide, comfort, and equip God's people and send the Church out on mission Jn. 14:26; 16:13, 14; Acts 1:8).

Costas argued that the Church had a critical role to play in the pastorally oriented mission of the Triune God to the world.⁴⁰ He affirmed the pastoral aspect of the Church's mission in the Great Commission passage (Mt. 28:18-20). Jesus was perceived as the sovereign Shepherd who sent out in mission the people of faith to make disciples among the peoples of the world, to baptise them, and to teach disciples all that Jesus had taught them.⁴¹ Costas recognised this pastorally oriented missionary task of the Church throughout the New Testament.⁴² The pastoral aspect of the Church's mission was focused on humankind for the purpose of liberating it from sin and death and reconciling it with God. Therefore this pastoral aspect was the foundation of the Church's mission.⁴³

Costas stressed that the Church's pastoral actions had to be carried out in obedience to and in alignment with the mission of God in the world.⁴⁴ It was necessary for Christians to continually discern God's presence in concrete historical situations of the day and to obey God by joining with God at work in the world. Therefore the Church's mission was shaped by discerning where God was at work in the world and by being involved in obedience in what God was doing.

Although Costas affirmed that *la pastoral* should be on the side of humanity in general, he called for it to be oriented specifically to the Latin American peoples.⁴⁵ In order for the Latin American Church to carry out such a pastoral ministry, she was required to discern four matters: where God was at work in the present moment in the continent; what God's will was for particular Latin American contexts; what were God's diagnoses of various Latin American contexts; and what was the best form of the Church's pastoral action for each situation. It was the task of Latin American pastoral ministry to be involved in these issues of discernment.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Ibid., 90-2.

⁴¹ Costas viewed baptism as the way of gathering together once-lost people into God's flock.

⁴² The Spirit empowers the Church to search for lost sheep and lead them to the flock (Jn 10:14-7; 20:21-3; 21:15-7). The Church is also the agent of reconciliation (2Cor. 5:19-20; 6:1). The Church is charged to be priestly, prophetic, and on the side of those who suffer.

⁴³ Costas wrote that there was a place for *la pastoral* aspect within the Church, but that it was to be undertaken from the perspective of the primacy of the Church's mission in favour of all of humanity, and not just those inside the Church (ibid., 91).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 92.

⁴⁶ The Church's pro-human pastoral orientation had the task of asking the questions. The Church's pastoral perspective for inside the Church had the task of preparing and equipping the Church to respond to the questions (ibid.).

Inter-disciplinary Analyses of the Concrete Historical Situation

Critical analysis of an historical ‘concrete situation,’ according to Costas, was necessary for any pastoral reflection on Latin Americans.⁴⁷ Analytical tools of the various social sciences needed to be employed with theological disciplines to provide the data for pastoral reflection oriented to Latin American reality. Thus pastoral missiological reflection was interdisciplinary, utilising the insights and tools of non-biblical or theological disciplines. The object of the analysis was always the same: ‘the pastoral situation with Christ in the centre, made present by the Spirit, illuminating and judging the contextual encounter of the church with [humanity].’⁴⁸

Costas envisioned a pastoral theology based upon a multifaceted and interdisciplinary analysis of Latin America.⁴⁹ Pastoral reflection on the data collected by sociological and theological tools would reveal Latin American society as ‘dependent, oppressed and repressed, the victim of the hegemony of the great powers and of the exploitation of the egoist and oppressor oligarchy.’⁵⁰ Psychological analyses would provide insight into persons suffering multiple internal conflicts and anxieties, many of them rooted in the larger dysfunctional contexts in which Latin Americans found themselves living.

Costas acknowledged the contributions of anthropology that enabled the Church to understand the authentic expressions of the peoples of Latin America.⁵¹ By examining their symbols, customs, and other cultural expressions, their hopes and aspirations were heard. These expressions of many Latin American cultures had been frustrated, limited, and paralysed for centuries by repressive forces. Theological tools enabled Christians to understand human beings. Women and men were created by God and given a full range of possibilities to shape their lives as humans. But theology also recognised that persons were alienated from God and neighbour. Theology gave Christians insight into the world and history. It also recognised God at work in history to restore a broken and fragmented world.

⁴⁷ Ibid. The phrase ‘concrete situation’ is my translation of ‘la situación concreta,’ a term that Costas used often.

⁴⁸ My translation of *ibid.* The more inclusive ‘humanity’ rather than ‘Man’ is used to translate Costas’s use of ‘hombre’ in this sentence.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 92-3.

⁵⁰ My translation of *ibid.*, 92.

⁵¹ Ibid., 93.

Jesus Christ: The Primary Tool of Analysis

Costas argued that Jesus Christ was the chief instrument of analysis for shaping Latin American pastoral ministry.⁵² Christ was the lens through which the Christian was able to interpret and analyse Latin American reality and identify pastoral needs of the people. Indeed, for the Christian, Jesus was the preferred lens for developing a comprehensive vision of humanity. The various analytical tools of the social sciences were necessary for understanding of the people of the continent, but Jesus Christ was the primary analytical instrument for fashioning pastoral ministry on behalf of Latin Americans.

Jesus lived in a specific concrete historical situation and took that context seriously in order to understand the people with whom he shared in time and space.⁵³ The use of social sciences was necessary for formulating Latin American pastoral missiologies.⁵⁴ Jesus was ‘fundamental in our reading of the peculiar situation in which the Latin American lives today.’ Furthermore, he was preoccupied with every woman and man, boy and girl in every particular situation.⁵⁵ Christ focused his attention on those in prison, naked, hungry, thirsty, orphaned, widowed, poor, heartbroken, sick, sinful, and fallen. Moreover, he will resurrect the dead. Jesus Christ ‘permits us to see the Latin American [people] in all their heterogeneous, social and existential situation.’

Pastoral Theology and God’s Reign

Costas coupled pastoral missiology to Jesus Christ and also connected it to the reign of God.⁵⁶ The Father sent Jesus into the world to announce the coming of a new world order, the reign of God. As he proclaimed the reign of God, Jesus unmasked the present world order and judged the underlying powers causing conflict throughout history. In contrast to the old order, love, justice, and peace characterised God’s reign. It was a foretaste of a way of life yet to come and an announcement that the old way of death was on its way out. The more the Church reflected love, peace, and justice—the qualities of new creation life—the more they were inserted into history. The old order that worked against human well-being and promoted oppression and exploitation would be unmasked and undermined by the life-affirming qualities of the new reign.

⁵² Ibid., 93-6.

⁵³ Ibid., 93-4.

⁵⁴ Costas stated that everything about Jesus modelled the committed and critical use of techniques of analytical observation.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 94.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 94-5. The Spanish word *reino* can be translated into English as *reign* or *kingdom*. In this chapter the former is used.

Therefore there was conflict wherever Jesus and his reign were proclaimed and acknowledged.⁵⁷ But by his death on the cross, Christ defeated death and ushered in the new creation order. Based on Christ's death on the cross, the Church proclaims and anticipates the liberation of humanity and the elimination of death, oppression, and injustice. Costas interpreted the reign as both a sign of judgment and of hope.⁵⁸

Costas pointed out the vital role of the Holy Spirit, the pneumatic Christ, played in pastoral ministry.⁵⁹ The Spirit made Jesus Christ present in the pastoral situation and made understanding of the human condition possible. Christians were enabled by the Spirit to discern the presence of the reign among them in history and to formulate a faithful course of action. The Church was also empowered by the Spirit of Christ to be a foretaste of peace, love, and justice in concrete historical situations.

Latin Americans and Pastoral Ministry

Costas affirmed Jesus Christ as the primary analytical tool for understanding the Latin American people and proposed four guidelines for pastoral activity to Latin Americans.⁶⁰ First, the Latin American pastoral theology had to acknowledge the diversity of the people of the continent in terms of language, ethnicity, culture, religion, history, and geographical distribution. The pastoral aspect recognised that the Latin American people were not homogeneous, but diverse and living in a variety of situations. Recognising this, Costas contended that it was necessary for pastoral practitioners to mould pastoral action creatively according to the different contexts.

Second, Costas contended that Latin American pastoral ministry also had to be sensitive to the reality that Latin Americans were oppressed and dependent.⁶¹ He briefly recounted the history of oppression and injustice in Latin American and the effects it had on the people. Pastoral theology, therefore, had to be sensitive to those who were 'oppressed, exploited, mistreated and domesticated.'⁶²

Third, Latin American pastoral concern also had to join with Latin Americans yearning for a new world.⁶³ Often this was expressed only as a groan in the face of overwhelming weaponry, laws, prison, and torture that brought intimidation, abuse, death,

⁵⁷ Ibid., 95.

⁵⁸ Costas acknowledged the tensions between the 'already' and 'not yet' aspects of God's reign, the reality of the Church throughout the centuries and the Church of the long-awaited new order.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 95-6.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 96-7.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Costas described the situation even further as a people disfigured by extreme poverty, political impotence, cultural domination, alcoholism, malnutrition, vices, robbery, and prostitution.

⁶³ Ibid., 97.

and silence. But at the same time, 'it is certain that the seed of change is in the hope that is cultivated by the imagination. It is the passionate determination of people who deny death, but continue to express life through their fiestas, songs, poems, and football games!'⁶⁴ Building upon the theological reflection on hope of Rubem Alves, Costas linked suffering with the vision for a new beginning.⁶⁵ The pastoral aspect helped people realise that some day there would be people who would never accept conditions as they were. Imagination would give birth to a vision for a new world and reality.

Fourth, Costas affirmed that pastoral theology must recognize the personal reality of every human being.⁶⁶ This meant that every person has issues of personal needs; struggles; internal conflicts; questions; and feelings of a personal nature such as guilt, desperation, loneliness, and emptiness. There were also such concerns as alcoholism, drug addiction, marital problems, sexual confusion, and emotional maladjustment. These issues were personal, and their pastoral treatment required attention that was personal.⁶⁷ But Costas also warned that pastoral ministry should not become truncated by reducing it to either the personal or the collective.

Costas ended this critically important essay by identifying three lines of direction for Latin American Protestant pastoral activity.⁶⁸ He stressed that these lines 'respond and reflect a profound commitment with the Latin American [people], in [the] concrete historical situation.'⁶⁹ Furthermore, pastoral action must be evangelical and ecumenical; contextual and indigenous; and inside and outside of the Church.⁷⁰

An Indigenous and Contextual Pastoral Theology

Costas asserted that pastoral action on behalf of Latin Americans had to be contextual and indigenous.⁷¹ This meant that the pastoral must not only 'be oriented toward the concrete situation in which the Latin American person lives, but also that it must be done in its own categories and symbols, resources and talents.'⁷² Therefore pastoral action varies according to the situation. Costas envisioned that Christian pastoral ministries would be

⁶⁴ My translation of *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Rubem Alves, *Tomorrow's Child: Imagination, Creativity and the Rebirth of Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 201.

⁶⁶ Costas, 'Hacia pastoral evangélica,' 97.

⁶⁷ Costas warned against confining pastoral theology to the socio-economic, cultural, and political realms. This should be avoided at all cost.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 98-107.

⁶⁹ My translation of *ibid.*, 98.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 98-107.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 100-101.

⁷² My translation of *ibid.*, 100.

contextualised and indigenous according to critical reflection on faithful action in a variety of situations.

Costas envisioned that the Latin American people would receive pastoral action that was supported by serious theological reflection. Furthermore, he foresaw that this pastoral theology would respond to the whole spectrum of life of the Latin American people. Pastoral theological reflection arose as a result of listening to people from a variety of situations on the continent and then directing it back to them for their benefit. Costas planned for an action-reflection process to which people from all congregations, ecclesiastical groups, and the larger Latin American Church could contribute.

Costas and others saw a need for a Latin American Protestant pastoral missiology and reflected on what it might look like if it ever came into reality. They began to dream and to plan. Thus the ground was prepared for the foundation of el Centro Evangélico Latinoamericano de Estudios Pastorales.⁷³

El Centro Evangélico Latinoamericano de Estudios Pastorales (CELEP)

In late 1973, Costas was involved in several meetings that discussed the need for 'Protestant, contextual, autochthonous theological—pastoral reflection.'⁷⁴ In early 1974, several weeks after Costas had presented his essay on the need for a Protestant pastoral theology, the Centro Evangélico Latinoamericano de Estudios Pastorales (CELEP) was founded.⁷⁵ From the beginning of CELEP, Costas sought to fashion a theological-pastoral vision for the Centre.⁷⁶ He envisioned CELEP as an evangelical type of IPLA.⁷⁷ The stated purpose of CELEP, according to its bylaws, was to be a 'catalyzing focus for pastoral reflection and testing.'⁷⁸ They also stipulated that CELEP would not have a central location, a full-time staff, or an agenda of long-term projects. Its goal was 'to stimulate critical reflection on ministry in the missionary context of the Latin American Evangelical churches, by all possible means starting from concrete needs and using available resources.'⁷⁹

⁷³ In English, The Latin American Evangelical Centre for Pastoral Studies.

⁷⁴ Orlando E. Costas, 'CELEP and Ministry,' *Occasional Essays [of CELEP]* 12, no. 2 (1985): 121.

⁷⁵ CELEP was founded by Costas with the collaboration of three colleagues: Kenneth B. Mulholland, Róger Velásquez, and Alejo Quijada (ibid.).

⁷⁶ This period of time was the last six months of Costas's first term of service with CLAME (1970-74) and just before he went to Amsterdam to do doctoral research at the Free University (ibid.).

⁷⁷ Any Protestant church would be invited to use the resources of CELEP. Costas looked to IPLA as one of the key institutions that stimulated pastoral renewal in the Latin American Roman Catholic Church in the 1960s and 1970s (ibid.).

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ For a detailed accounting of the phases of CELEP from 1973-1985, see: ibid., 121-23.

From the later vantage point of 1985, Costas saw CELEP as ‘a new initiative in Protestant ministry’ that was ‘within the pastoral fabric in Latin America.’⁸⁰ It was founded in order to provide ‘a focal point for critical reflection on ministry.’ Costas highlighted two ways CELEP contributed to Latin American pastoral reflection: it contextualised pastoral language and developed a new conceptualisation of pastoral theology.

CELEP’s Contributions to Pastoral Theology

CELEP contributed to the contextualisation of pastoral language of Latin American Protestantism.⁸¹ Ever since it was founded in 1973, CELEP had sought to develop a pastoral language that was both forged by theological reflection and grounded in Latin American reality. In Costas’s view CELEP had ‘managed a modest contextualisation of the language of ministry’ since then.

CELEP was inspired by the pastoral renewal experienced by the Roman Catholic Church that occurred as a result of ‘the dynamic usage that was given to the term *pastoral*.’⁸² Pastoral ministry was viewed as the task of Christians faithful to the Church’s mission rather than just the work of the Catholic hierarchy.⁸³ CELEP provided opportunities for Latin American Protestant Christians to follow the lead of their Roman Catholic counterparts in viewing mission as the responsibility of the whole Church, rather than the work of a few specialists.⁸⁴

The Pastoral Aspect of the Church’s Mission

CELEP also began using the word *ministry* to describe the mission of the Church.⁸⁵ Protestant circles had limited the use of the word to only activities officially recognised by the Church.⁸⁶ CELEP chose the Spanish word *la pastoral* to refer to any activity that contributed to the Church carrying out her mission. In his 1973 essay ‘Hacia una pastoral evangélica para el hombre latinoamericano,’ Costas expanded on this explanation of *la pastoral*. The pastoral aspect, he wrote, was defined as ‘any action that seeks to correlate the gospel (or the Christian faith) with the concrete situations of daily life, serving to

⁸⁰ Ibid., 123-24.

⁸¹ Ibid., 124.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Regarding this insight Costas referred to: Galilea, ed., *Información*, 144.

⁸⁴ Protestants were more concerned that pastoral ministry was the exclusive task of the congregational ministers than of the Church hierarchy.

⁸⁵ Costas, ‘CELEP/ Ministry,’ 124.

⁸⁶ Costas argued that this view of ministry was residual baggage inherited from Anglo-Saxon pastoral theology. It was critical that Latin American pastoral theology be freed from that imported alien concept. Moreover, as is the case in the United Kingdom and in Latin America, ‘ministry’ referred to governmental departments. Therefore the term *pastoral* was selected to take the place of *ministry*.

bridge the experience (internalization, incorporation and actualization) of the faith with daily life.’⁸⁷ Just as human life was diverse and varied, the pastoral dimension was seen to be just as diverse and varied. By means of a wide variety of pastoral ministries and actions the Church was expected to engage with human life in all its diversity.

By stating that pastoral ministry took place outside the congregation as well as within it, Costas coupled the Church’s pastoral ministry with the Church’s mission.⁸⁸ The traditional view of pastoral ministry had been limited to the activity of ordained ministers in their respective parishes, congregations, or areas of jurisdiction.

CELEP and Costas recognised, and perhaps rediscovered, that there was a pastoral shape to the mission of the Church.⁸⁹ They understood that the shape of the Latin American Church’s mission was contoured to the situations of the continent. The Church was called to address pastorally the particular issues of Latin America. Her mission, therefore, took place both within and outside the Church. Since there was no area of life that was beyond the reach of the Church’s mission, there was also no segment of life that was outside the pastoral concern of the Church’s mission. Because of the variety of pastoral situations arising from life in Latin America, CELEP expected there would be a diversity of pastoral models reflected in Latin American Protestantism.

Second, Costas recognised that there was a need for a ‘new conceptualization of pastoral theology,’ especially within Protestant circles.⁹⁰ CELEP sought to develop pastoral ministry as a missiological discipline, and, therefore, ‘not as a theory of certain institutional functions or professions, but instead as *critical and systematic reflection about the Church’s pastoral activity*.’⁹¹ This statement summed up what Costas hoped CELEP would seek to do: ‘to be an instrument of God in the Church...and in Latin American society.’⁹²

Costas’s Assessment of CELEP

By 1980, six years after its founding, CELEP had made its influence felt all over the continent and was ‘faithfully maintaining the evangelistic, biblical, evangelical and ecumeni-

⁸⁷ My translation of: Costas, ‘Hacia pastoral evangélica,’ 111. Translated from Spanish as: ‘Towards an Evangelical Pastoral [Theology] for the Latin American [People]. My English translation adds *Theology* to the title, uses *evangelical* to stand for either *Protestant* or the narrower sense of *evangelical*, and substitutes *peoples* for *hombre* (Man).

⁸⁸ Costas, ‘CELEP/ Ministry,’ 124.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 125. Pastoral ministry had usually been viewed as pertaining to the professional ministers of the Church.

⁹¹ The text in *ibid* is underlined.

⁹² Ibid., 126 citing from: CELEP, ‘CELEP, Serving the People of God in a Turbulent Continent.’ Promotional brochure. San José: CELEP, 1974.

cal legacy that had oriented the original vision of its work.⁹³ During his time as director of CELEP Costas evaluated missiologically the ways that the Church engaged with Latin America reality. He described his involvement in the founding of CELEP as ‘one of the most creative moments in my life and theological pilgrimage.’⁹⁴

Regarding the Centre’s evangelistic heritage Costas located its roots in the In-Depth Evangelism movement (IDE)⁹⁵ and its focus on evangelisation.⁹⁶ At first, CELEP was considered the theological arm of IDE, but the Centre gradually developed its own identity. In view of this heritage, Costas hoped CELEP would continue to combine the gospel with proclamation and theory with action.

Costas also acknowledged CELEP’s biblical tradition.⁹⁷ He affirmed that theology was based on the reading of the testimony of the Scripture and readings of Latin American reality. In opposition to those who give priority to the situation over the Bible or the Bible over the situation, CELEP held the two together in tension. It ‘refused to marry either sociology or bibliology.’ The result hoped for was a contextual theology that was ‘more and more biblical and increasingly incarnational within our reality.’

Having an ‘evangelical legacy’ meant that CELEP drew from the heritage of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation as well as that of the Pietist and evangelical re-

⁹³ Orlando E. Costas and Plutarco Bonilla, ‘CELEP in the Decade of the Eighties,’ *Occasional Essays [of CELEP]* 12:2 (1985): 129-30. The same report written in Spanish can be found in: Plutarco Bonilla, ‘El CELEP en la década de los ochenta,’ ed. CELEP (San José, Costa Rica: Centro Evangélico Latinoamericano de Estudios Pastorales, 1980).

⁹⁴ My translation of: Costas, ‘Teólogo,’ 29.

⁹⁵ According to Costas, IDE was a worldwide evangelistic movement that began as evangelism experiment in Nicaragua in 1960. He described it as ‘an effort to mobilize the church of Jesus Christ with all of her resources for a comprehensive witness to the world.’ The movement provided a ‘dynamic evangelistic concept, a comprehensive strategic methodology and a coordinated, functional program’ (Orlando E. Costas, ‘Depth in Evangelism: An Interpretation of “In-Depth Evangelism” Around the World,’ in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, ed. Douglas (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1975), 675. For more on IDE from Costas’s perspective, see: Orlando E. Costas, ‘From Evangelism-in-Depth to In-Depth Evangelism,’ *In-Depth Evangelism Around the World* 1:1 (1973); idem, ‘In-Depth Evangelism: A Response to the Crisis of Contemporary Evangelism,’ in *Trends* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1974).

⁹⁶ Costas stated that within the field of missiology he specialized in evangelisation, *ie.*, ‘communicating the gospel to other peoples and calling them to faith and repentance’ [Orlando E Costas, ‘Missiology: From the Underside of History, Interview by Dannette G Costas,’ (Newton Center, MA: Manuscript from taped interview, 1985), 3]. For other selected writings of Costas on evangelization, see: Orlando E Costas, ‘Evangelism in the Eighties: Witnessing to a New World Order,’ in *The Church Reaches Out Conference* (Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, MA, 1981); ‘Evangelism in a Latin American Context,’ *Evangelical Review of Theology* 3:1 (1979); ‘Evangelism from the Periphery: A Galilean Model,’ *Apuntes* 2 (1982); ‘Evangelism and the Gospel of Salvation,’ *International Review of Missions* 63 (1974); Orlando E. Costas, ed., *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1973); ‘Hacia una evangelización pertinente,’ in *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización*, ed. Costas (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1973); ‘Aspectos sobresalientes del ministerio de Jesús y sus implicaciones para la evangelización,’ in *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1973); Orlando E. Costas, ‘La iglesia como agente evangelizador,’ in *Hacia una Teología de la Evangelización*, ed. Costas (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1973).

⁹⁷ Costas in Costas and Bonilla, ‘CELEP / 1980s,’ 129. The central issue seems to be a hermeneutical concern rather than a concern for the nature of the Bible.

newal movements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁹⁸ Those associated with CELEP recognised themselves ‘as heirs of the spirituality expressed in an active piety, an evangelizing and socializing mission, and a firm conviction of the necessity for personal regeneration and the authority of the Bible on matters of faith and polity.’ CELEP sensed it was part of a larger evangelical culture that extended all over the world.

Lastly, Costas recognised that CELEP received an *ecumenical* spirit and commitment.⁹⁹ CELEP cooperated with Roman Catholics and other Protestants in programmes and issues of common interest. It also worked alongside such other Protestant non-church organisations as the World Council of Churches and the World Evangelical Fellowship. Therefore, there was a kinship with the evangelical Protestant tradition tied into an ecumenical openness. Costas expressed his hope that CELEP would continue to nurture ecumenical cooperation and commit itself to the Church’s unity in the 1980s.

CELEP, Costas, and Plutarco Bonilla

As director, Costas gave CELEP a theological legacy upon which others continued to shape the ministry.¹⁰⁰ When Costas left CELEP in 1980, Plutarco Bonilla succeeded him as director of CELEP and continued to develop Latin American pastoral ministry.¹⁰¹ Bonilla noted that CELEP was shaped in the 1970s ‘to form a large “pastoral family” capable of offering a renewed vision of the life and mission of the Latin American Church.’¹⁰² CELEP crossed national and regional boundaries and became a continental centre of pastoral research. He affirmed that the Centre remained biblical, evangelical, ecumenical, Latin American, church-based, pastorally oriented, and in solidarity with the Third World.¹⁰³

The priority given to pastoral ministry was embedded in the Centre’s name: ‘The Latin American Centre for Pastoral Studies.’ Bonilla pointed out ‘pastoral’ was used as an adjective —Centre for *Pastoral* Studies—but CELEP viewed ‘pastoral’ as a noun.¹⁰⁴ It is difficult to capture this sense in English, but in Spanish the noun ‘la pastoral’ conveys what Costas, Bonilla, and CELEP were doing. Bonilla explained that *the pastoral* dealt

⁹⁸ Ibid., 130.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ As director Costas administered CELEP and oversaw CELEP’s two journals, *Pastoralia* and *Occasional Essays* (Costas, ‘Teólogo,’ 29).

¹⁰¹ Plutarco Bonilla, a close colleague of Costas, took over as director of CELEP in 1980. As the incoming director of CELEP after Costas, Bonilla wrote a section about CELEP in the 1980s in: Costas and Bonilla, ‘CELEP / 1980s,’ 130-136.

¹⁰² Bonilla in: *ibid.*, 131.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 131-35.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 135.

not only with the work done by ordained clergy, but especially with ‘any and all aspects of the life and mission of the Church.’

CELEP promoted a pastoral shape of the Church’s mission that was biblical, dynamic, and ‘overall.’¹⁰⁵ The Centre was biblical because it encouraged a re-reading of the gospels and a rediscovery of the Jesus of the gospels. Jesus Christ preached good news to the poor, lived out what he taught, and reached out to publicans, sinners, and the oppressed. The Bible moulded CELEP’s ministry and empowered Christians to be God’s servants in the world. The Centre’s ministry was dynamic because mission was not limited to verbal proclamation of the gospel within the four walls of a congregation, but meant to be proclaimed ‘outside the camp.’ This meant Christians were to go to the poor and the oppressed and stand with them. Bonilla also explained that CELEP’s ministry was ‘overall’ in the sense that there was no aspect of human life that was left untouched by the pastoral mission of the Church.¹⁰⁶

Critical Comments

Costas’s second and third conversions of his theological itinerary led him to *la pastoral*. His conversion to his Latin American identity and heritage heightened his consciousness of 500 hundred years of brutal oppression and exploitation of the continent. As a result of his socio-political conversion, he committed himself to standing in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. He challenged the Latin American Protestant Christians to go outside their well-established holy huddles and join with Christ in engaging with a continent in a revolutionary situation. *La pastoral* was the way by which Costas put all that into motion.

In its most developed sense, *la pastoral* was presented as critical and systematic reflection on the Church’s pastoral activity. Pastoral activity was any activity that contributed to the Church carrying out her mission. The Church’s mission was pastoral to the extent that it sought to proclaim the gospel in ways that engaged with all the concrete situations of daily human life in all its diversity. Costas also portrayed as critical pastoral reflection on the efficacy of Christian social action in the socio-economic and political contexts of Latin America. It was meant to evaluate the quality and extent of the interaction between Church and society. The goal of *la pastoral* was the renewal of the Church

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. For Costas’s views on holistic mission, see: Orlando E. Costas, *The Integrity of Mission: The Inner Life and Outreach of the Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979); Priscilla Pope-Levison, ‘Comprehensive and Contextual: The Evangelism of Orlando Costas.’ *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 4 (1988-89).

and the transformation of human society. Thus the theological disciplines were combined with the social sciences to assess the efficacy of the Church's encounters with humanity.

Costas expounded the concept of *la pastoral* by viewing it from within the larger context of the Triune nature of God. The Triune God is engaged with the world as a missionary God. The Triune missionary God is portrayed in Scripture as the Good Shepherd who acts pastorally in the world. As such, God's nature is to protect, lead, and provide for God's people. Costas recognised the pastoral ministry of the Triune missionary God. The Triune missionary God has been active throughout history to redeem and gather together lost and wandering people. This is most clearly seen in Jesus Christ. God the Father sent God the Son to carry out God's pastoral mission in the world. The Son's specific mission was to give his life on behalf of his lost sheep. Then the Father and the Son sent God the Spirit into the world to continue the pastoral work of the mission of God. In due time the Triune God sent the Church into the world to carry on with the work of the divine mission. Thus the pastoral aspect of the Church's mission was placed within the theological context of the Triune God.

Although Costas rarely referred directly to the doctrine of the Incarnation in his writings on *la pastoral*, he did use it indirectly to provide the theological foundation for the concept of 'concrete historical situations' in those writings. *La pastoral* called the Church to continually discern God's presence in the concrete historical situations of Latin America and then to obey by joining with God there. It also meant discerning how and why God was at work in each situation. *La pastoral* was about the Church's commitment to people in their own concrete historical situations of Latin America. Since Jesus' ministry in the flesh has ended, he continues to dwell with humanity through the Spirit. The Church discovers the flesh and blood reality of humanity by being present where Jesus dwells. According to Costas, Jesus is preoccupied with every person in every particular situation, but he gives preference to the poor, suffering, and marginalized. The pastoral action that the Church takes is based on critical analysis of the targeted concrete historical situations. The social sciences coupled with the theological disciplines were expected to analyse the situations and shape the Church's engagement with the people in a particular situation. It is certain, moreover, that through the Spirit, Jesus dwells among men, women, and children. It is among them and in their own particular situations, that the Church is called to mission.

Costas's writings on *la pastoral* indicate that its purpose was to introduce the gospel into every area of life, from the intimate and personal to socio-economic, political, and

cultural issues. It was intended to recognise the personal reality of every person. Thus personal needs, struggles, issues, dysfunctions, conflicts, questions and feelings were to be addressed by the Church's pastoral mission. Yet *la pastoral* was also intended to engage with the macro social issues of domination, exploitation, dependency, oppression, and injustice that the continent had experienced for the last five centuries. The pastoral shape of the Church's mission was expected to respond to the full spectrum of life of the people of Latin America. No area of life was beyond the reach of *la pastoral*.

La pastoral responded to the trauma of brutal injustice, oppression, domination, and exploitation that the people of Latin America had experienced over the centuries. Costas envisioned the Church's pastoral mission bringing the gospel to bear on people who had suffered the painful consequences of having been so greatly sinned against by a series of foreign powers and their continental allies. He rightly took seriously that people are sinned against, but there is very little, if any, indication in his writings that *la pastoral* brought the gospel to people who had sinned against God and their neighbour. In Psalm 106, the people of Israel in the wilderness constantly sinned against Yahweh, their liberator, both personally and corporately, through their constant infidelity, idolatry, disobedience, rebellion, wandering, and complaining. In Egypt, they had been sinned against, but in the wilderness they sinned against Yahweh, their liberator.

Psalm 78, a companion to Psalm 106, rehearsed the narratives of Israel's liberation from bondage in Egypt and her sojourn in the wilderness. As with Psalm 106, the focus in Psalm 78 is on Yahweh's steadfast covenantal faithfulness to Israel despite her constant infidelity against Yahweh and God's covenant with her. As the Shepherd of Israel, Yahweh delivered God's people from death in Egypt, led them as God's 'sheep' out of mortal danger in that land of bondage, and then, as God's 'flock,' guided and protected them through the wilderness (Psalm 78:51-53). The emphasis of both psalms is not on Israel's being 'sinned against' by her enemies, but her constant sinning against Yahweh, her liberator. Both psalms portray Israel's unceasing disobedience, unfaithfulness, rebellion, idolatry, and grumbling. Regarding Costas's presentation of *la pastoral*, it is like he emphasised Israel being brutally sinned against by her enemies, but did not even consider the long history of Israel constantly sinning against her liberator. Costas handled the pastoral mission of the Church in a way that rightly engaged with the long history of sins against the people of Latin America, but did not even consider present sins against God that is part of the heritage of Israel in the wilderness.

Chapter Conclusions

By means of *la pastoral*, Costas and his colleagues at CELEP expressed a Latin American evangelical Protestant pastoral missiology. They contoured the pastoral shape of the missiology to the concrete historical situations of the continent. Through her pastoral mission, the Church addressed the critical issues of Latin America, ranging from the personal and intimate to the socio-economic, political, and cultural. *La pastoral* sought the renewal of the Church and the transformation of society. No area of life and society was out of bounds or out of reach of the Church's pastoral mission. From the perspective of Psalm 106, it is asserted that Costas's presentation of *la pastoral* emphasised the Church's pastoral ministry to people as being sinned against and neglected addressing people as sinning against God.

CHAPTER SIX

Select Evangelical Missiologies

Costas's theological itinerary began with his consciousness of the reality of injustice and oppression in Latin America and the Third World. He became keenly aware that mainline and evangelical Protestant missionary efforts were under- or even undeveloped in terms of engagement with the socio-economic and political realities of the Third World. Costas interacted with emerging Latin America liberation and pastoral theologies. This chapter surveys Costas's interaction with various evangelical missiological expressions prominent in the 1970s and 80s.

The chapter begins with a review of evangelical characteristics that Costas identified. Then it examines Costas's interaction with the Church Growth Movement, a prominent missiological movement among evangelical Protestants in the 1970s and 80s. This is followed by Costas's assessment of conservative evangelical responses to missiological developments in the World Council of Churches, especially that of Peter Beyerhaus and the Frankfurt Declaration. The latter part of the chapter recognises Costas's sense of missiological kinship with the emerging Younger Evangelicals of the Third World, the Radical Evangelicals at Lausanne '74, and the Evangelical Mission Theologians from the Two Thirds World.

Evangelical Characteristics

In a 1987 article on evangelical theology in the Two Thirds world, he identified the central characteristics of Protestant evangelicalism.¹ Missionary intent was the primary characteristic of evangelical theology.² This meant that it 'has a burning passion for the communication of the gospel, especially in those areas where it has not yet been proclaimed.' Costas also recognised four other theological themes that characterised evangelicalism:

¹ Orlando E. Costas, "Evangelical Theology in the Two Thirds World," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 11 (1987). The 1987 article is used in this thesis even though it was first published in 1985. The other articles can be found in: *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990); *Conflict and Context: Hermeneutics*, ed. Hermeneutics in the Americas Conference (1983) [Ibid., 1986]; *Baptist Roots*, ed. J. Carpenter and W. Shenk (Ibid., 1999); *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin* 9 (1985). For the article in Spanish, see: "La teología evangélica en el mundo de los dos tercios," *Boletín Teológico* 19:28 (1987).

² Costas, "Evangelical Theology (1987)," 66.

the authority of Scripture, salvation by grace through faith, conversion as a significant experience of the Christian life, and a pious and moral life as the result of conversion.³ This had been the basis by which he assessed other evangelical missiologies.

The Church Growth Movement (CGM): A Survey

From his perspective from within the evangelical tradition, Costas carried on a lengthy and significant dialogue with the Church Growth Movement (CGM). The CGM was a branch of missiology that combined theological reflection with contemporary social and behavioural sciences in order to investigate the nature of churches and how they started, functioned, grew, multiplied, and declined.⁴ It was founded by Donald A. McGavran, promoted by the American Society of Church Growth, and researched effective ways to carry out evangelisation.⁵

In *The Church and Its Mission* (1974) Costas devoted one chapter to church growth in general and two chapters to the CGM in particular.⁶ In the first chapter in the section, chapter five, Costas asserted: ‘church growth is a natural and imperative trait of her missionary action.’⁷ Costas addressed the dynamic nature of church growth, the biblical case for it, and its theological rationale.⁸ In other articles Costas considered various ways integral church growth was critically important to the healthy life and ministry of churches.⁹ The following two chapters concentrated on the CGM itself. In the sixth

³ Ibid.

⁴ For overviews of the CGM, see: Rodger C. Bassham, *Mission Theology 1948-1975: Years of Worldwide Creative Tension: Ecumenical, Evangelical, and Roman Catholic* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1979), 188-96; Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 214-19; C. Peter Wagner, ‘Church Growth Movement,’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000). For studies on CGM, see: Donald Anderson McGavran and C. Peter Wagner, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990); Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993); Elmer L. Towns and Gary McIntosh, *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement: Five Views* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004).

⁵ McGavran (1897-1991) was born of American missionary parents in India and served as a missionary to India. He established the Institute of Church Growth in 1957, published the *Church Growth Bulletin* from 1964 until 1980, and in 1965 became founder and dean of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary. He was the first to promote the use of behavioural and social sciences for use in evangelism and planting churches. His primary research focused on the causes of church growth and decline. Two other key concepts in his thought were *people movements* and the *homogeneous unit principle* [Ken Mulholland, “McGavran, Donald,” in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000)]. For a select bibliography of McGavran’s writings, see Secondary Sources.

⁶ Orlando E. Costas, *The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1974), chaps. 5-7, pp. 87-149.

⁷ Ibid., 87.

⁸ The dynamic nature of church growth is covered in: *ibid.*, 87-90; the biblical evidence for growth of churches, 91-97; and theological reflection on church growth, 97-101.

⁹ For articles by Costas on general church growth, see: Orlando E. Costas, “Crecimiento integral y palabra de Dios,” *Misión* 2 (1983); “Dimensiones del crecimiento integral de la Iglesia,” *Misión* (1982): 9-14; “A Wholistic Concept of Church Growth,” in *Exploring Church Growth*, ed. Shenk (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.

chapter Costas analysed the CGM in terms of theological and socio-theological categories and strategy.¹⁰ In chapter seven he offered an appraisal of the Movement, noting its contributions and problems.¹¹

In his survey of the CGM, chapter six, Costas acknowledged the influence of McGavran and his 1955 book, *Bridges of God* on the CGM.¹² The CGM was a 'missionary school of thought' that had come out of McGavran's research and writings and from that of other missiologists who followed after him.¹³ They developed a missionary theory that was based upon the field research and experience of people movements in India.¹⁴ For his survey chapter of the CGM Costas identified current key texts to gain a better understanding of the CGM missiology.¹⁵

Costas observed that the CGM focused primarily on two aspects of general theology: the theology of the Church (ecclesiology) and the theology of mission (missiology).¹⁶ McGavran, C. Peter Wagner, and A. R. Tippett concentrated their theological reflection on the nature of the Church and her mission to the world. The Church's primary task in mission was outreach and evangelism. Evangelism was understood in terms of church growth. Church growth was the result of people recognizing their need for forgiveness of

B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1983); "Church Growth and Human Liberation," *Beautiful Feet/Evangelism for a New Day Special Joint Issue* (1976); "Our Mission and Church Growth: Towards a Missiology of Masses and Minority Groups," *Theological Fraternity Bulletin* 4 (1976); "Church Growth as a Multidimensional Phenomenon: Some Lessons from Chile," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 5 (1981); "Análisis sociocultural del crecimiento en las comunidades cristianas," *Misión* 5:3-4 (1986): 43-57; "Review of 'Theological Perspectives on Church Growth,' by Harvey M. Conn," *International Review of Mission* 66:262 (1977); it is reprinted in: Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982), chapter three, 43-57; "Mission as Integral Growth" in: Costas, *The Integrity of Mission: The Inner Life and Outreach of the Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), chapter four, 37-60. For a general survey of Costas's view on holistic church growth, see: Antonio Carlos Barro, "Orlando Enrique Costas: Mission Theologian on the Way and at the Crossroads" (PhD thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary / School of World Mission, 1993), 77-96.

¹⁰ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 103-22.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 123-49.

¹² *Ibid.*, 103.

¹³ Costas referred to the following: Alan Tippett, Ralph Winter, Wagner, Charles Kraft, and Arthur Glasser, and associates and students at the Institute of Church Growth and later at the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 104. According to Costas a missionary theory is 'an interpretation of mission' that 'analyzes the nature of mission, its chief ends, proposes a set of governing principles, and develops a strategy of missionary action.' The school that McGavran founded focused its research on theological, historical, and empirical investigation of the ways that churches grew.

¹⁵ The texts Costas consulted in his survey were: C. Peter Wagner, *Frontiers in Missionary Strategy* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972); Donald Anderson McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1970); idem, ed., *Eye of the Storm: The Great Debate in Mission* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1972); *The Bridges of God: A Study in the Strategy of Missions*; J. Waskom Pickett, *The Dynamics of Church Growth* (Lucknow, India: Lucknow Pub. House, 1963); A. R. Tippett, *Solomon Islands Christianity* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967); McGavran, ed., *Church Growth and Christian Mission* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

¹⁶ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 104-5.

their sins, receiving the gospel of the forgiveness of sins by God, and being incorporated into the Church.¹⁷

The Church Growth Movement (CGM): An Appraisal

After using a whole chapter in *The Church and Its Mission* to survey the theoretical assumptions and strategic principles of CGM, Costas used the following chapter to appraise the movement's theory.¹⁸ Costas began by asserting Church growth theory in general had been so prominent in contemporary missiology that it was imperative that current missiological reflection interact with CGM.¹⁹ He critically engaged with the movement in a number of articles.²⁰ Furthermore, the research and publications generated by the CGM stimulated literature on a variety of issues in church growth.²¹ From his perspective in the early 1970s, Costas argued that because church growth theory was 'a most controversial issue in contemporary missiology,' it needed to be critically evaluated.²²

Costas was concerned that CGM practitioners used critical analytical tools to study how churches grew, but failed to use them to better understand their own historical context as readers of Scripture.²³ They also neglected contemporary critical biblical scholarship that would have enabled them to understand the historical and literary contexts of biblical texts. As a result of these deficiencies, Costas contended that the CGM gravely misinterpreted them. He also challenged CGM's contention that the Church was the theological foundation for missiology, submitting in its place Jesus Christ as the proper locus

¹⁷ This is my sense of the meaning of selected texts presented in: *ibid.*, 106-7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, chapter 7, 123-49.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 123. Costas observed that CGM a significant number of missionaries and Third World Church leaders were doing research or studying about church growth at CGM institutions such as the Institute of Church Growth and Fuller's School of World Mission. The CGM was also publishing an abundance of books addressing various issues of the life, growth, and mission for churches both in the USA and abroad. The following titles are just a small taste of the research that was published: Charles W. Gates, *Industrialization: Brazil's Catalyst for Church Growth: A Study of the Rio Area* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1972); McGavran, *Church Growth in Mexico*; William R. Read and Frank Avery Ineson, *Brazil 1980: the Protestant Handbook: The Dynamics of Church Growth in the 1950's and 60's, and the Tremendous Potential for the 70's* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1973).

²⁰ For Costas's other writings on CGM, see: Orlando E. Costas, "La Iglesia como comunidad misionera en la misionología del movimiento de iglecrecimiento," *Misión* 5:2 (1986); "La estrategia de iglecrecimiento para la expansión del cristianismo," *Misión* 6:1 (1987); "Iglecrecimiento, el movimiento ecuménico y el 'evangelicalismo,'" *Misión* 3:2 (1984); "Origen y desarrollo del movimiento de crecimiento de la Iglesia," *Misión* 3:1 (1984); *ChristOG* 43-57. For a survey of Costas's interaction with the movement, see: Barro, "OECostas," 98-117.

²¹ A sample list includes: Sigiredo W. Bieske, *El Explosivo Crecimiento de la Iglesia Evangélica en Costa Rica* (San José, Costa Rica: Jossmay, 1989); Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Commission on Theology and Church Relations, *Evangelism and Church Growth: With Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement* (St. Louis: The Commission, 1987); C. Wayne Zunkel, *Church Growth under Fire* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1987); Roger E. Hedlund, *Church Growth in the Third World*, (Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, 1977).

²² Costas, *ChurchIM*, 123-4.

²³ *Ibid.*, 131-4.

of a Christian theology of mission.²⁴ CGM confined itself to ecclesiology while neglecting reflection on God's redemptive mission through Jesus Christ.

A Shallow Sense of Mission

Costas's argument was forceful in his critique of the CGM's views of the gospel, salvation, and mission as shallow.²⁵ He valued a holistic view of mission and used this concept to evaluate CGM's view of mission. The 'wholeness' of mission meant three things to him: 1) that 'incarnational witness' was of primary importance to mission;²⁶ 2) that 'the proclamation of the gospel should be understood as a form of social action (i.e., services);' and 3) that there was an ethical dimension to conversion.²⁷

Everything that Costas wrote in this section was grounded in the incarnational nature of divine revelation. God's self-revelation could not remain merely in the realm of ideas, but had to be expressed into history. God's redemptive work had always taken place in historical situations. The gospel, therefore, not only had to be verbally proclaimed, but incarnated in the world, thus bearing fruit in historical situations.²⁸ Costas warned that whenever the gospel was not incarnate in the world, it produced 'one of the worst forms of Christian heresy because it militates against the historical nature of Christianity.'

With the above in mind, Costas asked whether church growth theoreticians considered incarnational witness (i.e., non-verbal witness or proclamation of the gospel) to be on an equal footing with the verbal proclamation of the gospel, or of secondary importance. The CGM was known to affirm that incarnational witness did not have equal footing with the verbal proclamation of the gospel, but played a secondary and supportive role for the communication of the gospel.²⁹ Non-verbal witness or proclamation did not convey the gospel, but it did help people to hear and respond to the verbal proclamation of the gospel.

²⁴ Ibid., 134-7.

²⁵ Ibid., 137-43.

²⁶ By 'Incarnational witness' Costas meant called Christians to live for Christ in the world in order to share with other women and men about Christ. He criticised evangelicals who placed incarnational witness as secondary importance to mission. For Costas it was of primary importance to mission.

²⁷ Ibid., 138.

²⁸ Ibid. Costas valued the place of verbal proclamation of the gospel through preaching and evangelism. He participated in evangelistic teams as a young man, was known as a gifted preacher and vocalist, taught preaching and communications at SBLA, considered doing doctoral work in communications theory and preaching, and directed Evangelism in Depth. His point, however, was that even though verbal proclamation of the gospel was necessary, it was not sufficient. There had to be Christians bearing the fruit of the gospel in historical situations.

²⁹ Ibid., 139-40.

Costas anchored his response in scripture, especially the Johannine writings that affirmed the historical nature of the Christian faith.³⁰ The Word became flesh, and Christ was heard, seen, and touched by women and men. This was significant in two ways: 1) God's miraculous deeds in history led some people to faith in Christ; and 2) worship of God took place in the concrete situations of history.³¹ The writings of John were the foundation for the incarnational witness. Costas affirmed that the gospel was communicated through verbal means, but he could not understand how the CGM theorists limited it to that. He argued that the gospel was incarnated in historical contexts. The Spirit used both means to call people to conversion to Christ.

Therefore Costas appealed for preaching to be liberated from purely spiritual or evangelistic purposes and be reoriented to calling Christians to serve others.³² The CGM limited preaching to what Costas called the 'vertical relationship.'³³ He called for preaching that would also call people to the 'horizontal relationship' of service to one another in order to transform the human race.³⁴ This type of preaching would call persons to repentance from their sin and commitment to serving others. From this perspective on preaching, Costas critiqued the CGM view that emphasised the vertical relationship at the expense of the horizontal relationships. Accordingly, as it was with CGM's view of preaching, so it was with its view of mission: the vertical was affirmed to the neglect of the horizontal.

Costas also critiqued the CGM for its narrow focus on church growth. Preaching, serving others, and discipleship were undertaken for the sole purpose of church growth. Costas envisioned that these three tasks would be liberated from the confines of being used only for the church. Preaching, therefore, would challenge believers to serve others; people who were serving others would bear witness to the transforming power of the gospel; and discipleship would challenge believers to live their lives in accordance with the ethical demands of the gospel. Thus people would be incorporated into the life of a particular church and become involved in the mission of the Church.

Costas was concerned that the CGM's missiology promoted a deficient and shallow view of the Church and her mission. Some key elements of mission—preaching, serving

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ According to Costas these two assertions were foundation for the well-developed sacramental theology of the Gospel of John.

³² Ibid., 141-42.

³³ The 'vertical relationship' referred to the relationship between persons and God.

³⁴ The 'horizontal relationship' referred to the relationships among persons. Costas equated 'serving' with social action.

others, and discipleship—were confined by CGM’s narrow vision to the multiplication of churches. Costas hoped that the movement would one day expand its vision of preaching, serving, and discipleship for the transformation of humanity as well as the building up of the Church.

The CGM’s Failure to Address Third World Concerns

Furthermore, Costas expressed his concern that the CGM relied too heavily on the insights of anthropology and neglected the contemporary insights of other disciplines such as sociology, social psychology, and communication theory.³⁵ But the brunt of his concern in this section targeted church growth methodology’s inability to recognise the plight of Third World people.³⁶ Because the CGM had neglected the insights of other disciplines, its research had not delved into the tremendous structural problems affecting the Third World—their poverty-stricken situation due to their economic domination by a few rich countries and national oligarchies; their state of oppression, repression, and injustice on account of political systems created by and oriented to the well-being of a small minority; and the cultural, economic, political, and socially oppressive function of the technology of the affluent world.

Costas continued to press his case against the CGM: it did not consider how the gospel addressed unjust situations; it was not aware of the missionary enterprise’s link to the affluent nations’ socio-economic control over poor nations; it did not couple church planting with serious global issues; and, because it confined its research to social and cultural issues that affected church growth, it refused to address the life and death socio-political and economic problems of the world.³⁷ From Costas’s missiological viewpoint the Church’s engagement with the critical issues of the world were just as important as church growth.³⁸ But the CGM was blind to the traumatic realities of the world.

Despite the forcefulness of his concerns about the CGM, Costas expressed his appreciation for its contributions to current discussion on the Church and her mission.³⁹ It was ‘an important and positive theory of mission.’ He also acknowledged that its proponents heard his concerns and were addressing them. In his writings there are hints that there

³⁵ Ibid., 146-47.

³⁶ Ibid., 147-48.

³⁷ This was perhaps Costas’s strongest case against the CGM. He broke through the confines of mere analysis and advocated for Third World people with a passionate force not as evident elsewhere in the book. He identified urbanisation, secularisation, poverty, and revolution as the critical issues of the day that the Church needed to address.

³⁸ Ibid., 148.

³⁹ Ibid., 149.

were heated exchanges between Costas and church growth theorists, especially McGavran. But a leading proponent of church growth theory, C. Peter Wagner, wrote one of the forewords for *The Church and Its Mission*.⁴⁰ He concluded the section on the CGM calling those committed to the life and mission of the Church ‘to utilize [church growth theory] as much as we can in our ministry and to strengthen it with our own valuable insights.’

Conservative Evangelical Disagreement with the WCC

Describing himself as an evangelical,⁴¹ Costas reflected on what he perceived to be a tension between many evangelicals and the World Council of Churches (WCC).⁴² The critical issue that pitted evangelicals against ecumenical Protestants was the role of humanisation in the modern missionary enterprise.⁴³ A growing number of ecumenical Protestants were challenging the Church to identify with revolutionary struggles for economic, political, and social changes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Mission meant joining in solidarity with revolutionary forces that struggled to build a society of justice and peace. In 1968, an era marked by student protests, assassinations, wars, and social revolution worldwide, the Fourth Assembly of the WCC took place in Uppsala, Sweden.⁴⁴ Many of the participants attending the assembly viewed these conflicts as opportunities for Christians to engage with the world.

⁴⁰ Ibid., xiv-xv.

⁴¹ Ibid., 205. Costas used the word ‘evangelical’ to describe his Christian heritage and not to give a theological exposition of his beliefs.

⁴² The WCC’s roots are found in the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. During the next forty years it was shaped by a series of ecumenical conferences and assemblies on Church unity and mission. At the 1948 Assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam 1948 the WCC became an official world assembly of churches. Since then WCC churches have sought to be in communion with Jesus Christ, to work together in mission, to seek greater unity, and to act cooperatively in joint discussions and actions as such opportunities arise. For more information on the WCC, see: Paul Bock, *In Search of a Responsible World Society: The Social Teachings of the World Council of Churches* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974); Tom Stransky, “World Council of Churches,” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. Lossky (Geneva / Grand Rapids, MI: WCC Publications / Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1991); Willem Adolph Visser ‘t Hooft, *The Genesis and Formation of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982); Ernest W Lefever, *Amsterdam to Nairobi: The World Council of Churches and the Third World* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center, Georgetown University, 1979).

⁴³ Costas pointed out that missions had always reflected this humanising role. Mission had been involved in the reform of social ills, health issues, educational advancement, social welfare, disaster relief, and economic development.

⁴⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 175-84. For background information on the Assembly, see: Bassham, *Mission Theology*, 79-83. Eugene Carson Blake, “Uppsala and Afterwards,” in *History of the Ecumenical Movement: The Ecumenical Advance*, ed. Fey (London: SPCK, 1970), 413-45; Arthur F. Glasser, “World Council of Churches Assemblies,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 1025; Yates, *Christian Mission*, 196-98; David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 382-84.

The polarisation between conservatives and ecumenical Protestants also came to a crisis point at the assembly. Some of the participants viewed the global tensions, student protests, and revolutionary activity as opportunities for Christians to become involved in the world. The conservative evangelicals attending the Assembly, on the other hand, were wary of the direction in which the WCC was heading. In response to this tension, delegates to the Assembly were asked to reach a compromise that would present a balanced and holistic view of mission. It would affirm mission as both a holistic engagement of Christians with the world for social justice and proclamation, witness, and church growth.

Costas recognised that contemporary missiology had moved from a classical view of missions to a new understanding of it.⁴⁵ Prior generations of missiologists affirmed socio-political engagement by the Church as fruit of the Church's primary task to proclaim the gospel and plant churches.⁴⁶ But it became evident that an increasing number of WCC missiologists and church leaders were convinced that the primary task of mission was socio-political engagement.⁴⁷ Also WCC-related churches and church leaders were responding to the challenges of liberation theology and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed who were struggling for liberation. Salvation was described in socio-political terms and the Church was exhorted to be present wherever God was at work. The social sciences were contributing to a greater understanding of human life and to biblical scholarship and understanding.

Conservative evangelical members of the WCC were concerned that the ecumenical Protestant missiologists would continue to aggressively promote the humanisation view of the Church's mission then dominant in the WCC.⁴⁸ Costas described the conservative evangelicals as 'mount[ing] a frontal attack' on the dominant WCC missiology that favoured socio-political and economic engagement as the primary task of mission.

The Church and the World

Because he was concerned about the growing conflict and division between the ecumenically-minded missiologists of the WCC and the more conservative evangelical missio-

⁴⁵ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 175-76. Costas saw this whole new and innovative understanding of mission described in: Peter Beyerhaus, *Missions: Which Way? Humanization or Redemption*, trans. Clarkson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1971).

⁴⁶ The term 'socio-political' can also be understood to include the economic and cultural aspects of human life.

⁴⁷ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 176.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 177. Costas did not state what he meant by 'conservative evangelicals.' But a careful reading of the context would suggest that they stressed evangelism, personal conversion, preaching, church planting, churches, and church growth as the primary tasks of the Church's mission.

logists, Costas undertook a careful study of 'The Renewal in Mission Report' that was presented at Uppsala 1968 Assembly.⁴⁹ The main point that Costas identified was that the Church was no longer the only means of mission by which God used to redeem the world. The primary agent of mission was no longer the Church, but Christians who were involved in revolutionary movements, university campuses, urban areas, industrialisation, rural areas, and non-developed regions.⁵⁰

Costas took special interest in a part of the report that spoke of the Church's mission in the world:

The church is rightly concerned for the world's hundreds of millions who do not know the Gospel of Christ. It is constantly sent out to them in witness and service. But that concern becomes suspect when the church is preoccupied with its own numerical strength and institutional strength. It is called to be the servant body of Christ to and for the world.⁵¹

The report emphasised that the Church was primarily for those outside of the Church, and not for those within the Church. The mission of the Church was to serve others and not for self-service.

Costas agreed with evangelicals who objected to the Report's dismissal of such traditional mission concepts as repentance, conversion, and church growth. Furthermore, evangelicals were alarmed by the declining commitment to world evangelism. Before the Assembly Donald McGavran expressed his concern that the WCC report would overemphasise temporal issues and neglect evangelistic concerns.⁵² He rhetorically asked about the over two billion people who had not heard about salvation in Jesus Christ.⁵³ John Stott, a leading evangelical figure, articulated an evangelical response to Uppsala.⁵⁴ He was concerned that the report addressed physical hunger and poverty but neglected the spiritual hunger and impoverishment of the human race.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Ibid., 177-84, using the following as reference: Norman Goodall, ed., *The Uppsala Report 1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968).

⁵⁰ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 179-81, Costas's reading of: Goodall, ed., *The Uppsala Report 1968*, 30-2.

⁵¹ Ibid., cited in: Costas, *ChurchIM*, 181.

⁵² Ibid., 184.

⁵³ Donald McGavran, "Will Uppsala Betray the Two Billion?" *Church Growth Bulletin* IV:5 (1968).

⁵⁴ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 185. John R.W. Stott (1921-), an Englishman, has been a prominent Christian statesman, mission advocate, and theologian of the international evangelical movement.

⁵⁵ For an overview of Stott's views on Uppsala, see: Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: A Global Ministry* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001), 120-27, especially 123-27. For Stott's written responses to Uppsala, see: John Stott, "Does Section Two Provide Sufficient Emphasis on World Evangelism?" in *The Eye of the Storm: The Great Debate in Mission*, ed. McGavran (Chicago: World Books, 1972); John R.W. Stott, "The Rise and Fall of Missionary Concern in the Evangelical Movement, 1910-1973," in *Vocation and Victory*, ed. Winterhager and Brown (Basle: Brunnen, 1974); John Stott, "Why I Was Disturbed," in *The Church of England Newspaper* (23 August 1968).

Peter Beyerhaus, Costas, and the Younger Evangelicals

Costas identified the strongest negative response to the Report coming from a group of German conservative theologians led by Peter Beyerhaus.⁵⁶ The group's missiological concerns were forcefully expressed in the Frankfurt Declaration.⁵⁷ In two rather lengthy sections Costas engaged with both the Declaration and Beyerhaus.⁵⁸ He described the Frankfurt Declaration as emerging from 'a group of conservative theologians in Germany who were greatly disturbed with the new trends in the Ecumenical Movement's missiology.'⁵⁹

Costas ended the section on the declaration with an evaluation of the document, calling it shallow.⁶⁰ In view of the tension between the two Protestant groups, Costas wondered 'How Peter Beyerhaus, the mastermind behind the document, thinks that such a declaration could contribute to the integration of "the ecumenical socio-ethical concerns and the evangelical soteriological concerns in a harmonious manner" is beyond my imagination!'⁶¹ Rather than encouraging constructive dialogue between the two groups, Costas saw Beyerhaus as intensifying polarisation.⁶²

Costas found that he was moving in a different direction from that of Beyerhaus and the Frankfurt Declaration. He and like-minded colleagues 'insist[ed], among other things, in keeping both word and deed intrinsically tied together and interrelated, and [being] more sensitive to the concerns that have risen out of the social predicament of the "have-nots" (the poor and the exploited) of the earth and the implications of the gospel for their particular situation.'⁶³ They sought to present the whole gospel to the whole world.

Costas first critiqued Beyerhaus's insistence on the primacy of proclamation of the gospel in mission.⁶⁴ He argued that proclamation was not the sole or even the primary means of the Church's mission. The Church carried out her mission through her life as

⁵⁶ For a select bibliography of Beyerhaus's books, see Secondary Sources.

⁵⁷ The Declaration addressed perceived shifts in missiology in the WCC and responded to the 'Renewal in Mission' report prepared for the 1968 WCC Uppsala Assembly. The report was criticised because it promoted a completely new understanding of mission. The Declaration, approved and made public March 1970, was widely received among the international evangelical community, but largely ignored by the WCC leadership (A. Scott Moreau, "Frankfurt Declaration on the Fundamental Crisis in Christian Mission," in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

⁵⁸ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 189-208 for the former and 208-17 for the latter.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 206-08.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 207 referring to: Beyerhaus, *Missions*, 93.

⁶² The polarisation was between conservative evangelicals who wanted to retain the classical view of mission that stressed vertical reconciliation between God and humanity, and the ecumenical Protestants of the WCC who promoted a contemporary view of mission that emphasised the horizontal reconciliation.

⁶³ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 210.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 209-10. Proclamation meant preaching and witnessing.

well as through her proclamation. Secondly, Costas recognised that Beyerhaus wrote ‘as a North Atlantic missiologist committed to the thought categories and the continuation of the Western European and North American missionary enterprise.’⁶⁵ Beyerhaus failed to understand ‘the dynamics of the indigenization’ of the Church in the Third World—Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Therefore, he did not understand that many Third World Christians had been through a process of rethinking the Church’s mission from the perspectives of biblical theology and their own historical context. Costas shared Beyerhaus’s concern that some Third World theologians and Church leaders, critical of traditional evangelical missiology, promoted the Church’s social responsibility while de-emphasising traditional missions. But as an evangelical, Costas affirmed the Church’s mission as both evangelism and social engagement.

Beyerhaus and Third World Evangelicals

Yet Costas noted that ‘a goodly number of Third World Churchmen’ had remained within evangelicalism and remained committed to world mission.⁶⁶ He also mentioned North American evangelicals who were uneasy with the positions of their more conservative evangelical colleagues.⁶⁷ They shared a theological kinship of sorts with conservative evangelicals. But as they interacted with the humanisation missiology of the WCC and liberation theologies, they became increasingly critical of traditional North Atlantic missiology and the Western missionary enterprise.⁶⁸

Costas reiterated his concern that evangelicals in the North Atlantic were insisting that evangelicals in the Third World buy into North Atlantic missiology, especially as expressed in the Frankfurt Declaration. Costas was quite forceful when he wrote:

As a Third World churchman and missiologist I find it hard to accept Beyerhaus’s (and other North Atlantic leaders’) persistent suggestion that Christians and churches in the Third World consider adopting the Frankfurt Declaration. Without wanting to be impolite, I feel that it is perhaps a bit presumptuous on their part. For it comes

⁶⁵ Ibid., 211-3.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 212-3.

⁶⁷ Costas gave the following North American evangelical leaders as examples: evangelists Bill Pannell and Tom Skinner, *Other Side* editor John Alexander, and ‘a group of young theology professors in respected evangelical seminaries.’

⁶⁸ Costas observed that a North American form of Anglos-Saxon cultural domination was taken by North American missionaries to Latin America (Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 40-1). He especially referred to: Rubén Lores, "Manifest Destiny and the Missionary Enterprise," *Study Encounter* XI, no. I (1975). Lores linked the politico-ideological ideology of ‘manifest destiny’ to foreign mission programmes from the USA. He argued that missionaries from the USA exported ‘a “body” of attitudes, economic ideas, and rational loyalties that are more substantially related to the ideology of “manifest destiny” than the Gospel’ (Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 41, fn. 43, citing: Lores, "Manifest Destiny," 2). Also see: Costas, *Church-IM*, 10ff; C. René Padilla, "Evangelism and the World," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, ed. J.D. Douglas (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1975), 116-46.

through as one more attempt of North Atlantic Christians to impose a theological agenda on Christians from the Third World, as if we could not think for ourselves, were not engaged in our own process of critical reflection on the crisis and challenges of world mission, and as if we did not have theological resources to participate in defining a common concept of mission—and thus needed theological tutoring from the North Atlantic.⁶⁹

Costas was concerned that Beyerhaus and his colleagues were attempting to return to a bygone era of mission when the North Atlantic Church set the mission and theological agenda for the rest of the world.⁷⁰ It seemed to him and other evangelical leaders of the Third World that North Atlantic Church authorities were seeking to restore their authority over the Church in the Third World. Costas envisioned a time when Church leaders from all the nations would gather together to discuss the issue of the Church and her mission. '[E]ven the prominent German and North American theologians,' he wrote, 'may have something to learn from the analysis and perception of their less prestigious but equally sharp and committed Asian, African, and Latin American counterparts.'

Radical Evangelicals at the 1974 Lausanne Congress

In 1974 Costas joined with nearly 3000 participants and observers from 150 countries for the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization to discuss the nature and means of the Church's mission to the world from an evangelical perspective.⁷¹ One historian of mission commented that the Congress was 'an international gathering of Christian leaders which can stand in comparison with any of the great missionary conferences of the century, whether the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, the Jerusalem Conference of 1928 or the Tambaram Conference of 1939.'⁷² Participants at the Congress produced and endorsed, as their consciences so dictated, the Lausanne Covenant that has shaped evangelical action for the evangelization of the world.⁷³ Costas delivered a paper on In-Depth evangelization and later appraised the Congress as 'a sign of hope.'⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Costas, *ChurchIM*, 214-15.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 216-17. Costas wrote this as an addendum to the chapter on the WCC, Beyerhaus, and the Frankfurt Declaration.

⁷¹ For information on the Congress, see: Bassham, *Mission Theology*, 230-45; Jim Reapsome, "Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization (1974)," in *EDWM*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Yates, *Christian Mission*, 200-09. For insight into the Congress from John Stott, a significant shaper of the Congress, see: Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: Global*, 203-29. The addresses, papers, and responses of the Congress were collected and published as: J. D. Douglas, ed., *Let the Earth Hear His Voice* (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1975).

⁷² Yates, *Christian Mission*, 200.

⁷³ The Lausanne Covenant can be found in: Douglas, ed., *Let Earth Hear*, 3-9. For the Covenant with exposition and commentary by Stott, see: John R. W. Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known: Historic Mission Documents from the Lausanne Movement, 1974-1989* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1997), 1-55. For exposition of various clauses of the Covenant, see: René Padilla, ed., *The New Face of*

But some time during the Congress, Costas joined with 450 other evangelicals from North America, Great Britain, Australia, and the Third World and met as an *ad hoc* group to express their dissatisfaction with the dominant view of evangelicalism at the Congress.⁷⁵ The result of the group project was entitled ‘Theological Implications of Radical Discipleship,’ a document that communicated the group’s affirmations, confessions, joys, and resolutions, and published in the official collection of papers and responses of the Congress.⁷⁶ In a sense the group’s document received the endorsement of a significant world conference of evangelicals.

It may be suggested that the opportunities for the radical evangelical *ad hoc* group to make their assertions public and John Stott’s willingness to listen to them were significant because they enriched evangelicalism for decades to come. But it could have been otherwise: the radical evangelicals could have stated their case, but not have been listened to. One commentator on Stott’s role at Lausanne remarked: ‘[The radical evangelical group] would have been marginalized but John met with them, stayed with them, they felt that he was on their side, and he was ready to listen...’⁷⁷ Stott listened to the *ad hoc* group, commended its written assertions to the Congress, and signed it himself.

As Costas reflected on Lausanne, he was critical of what he called ‘the syndrome of evangelistic prioritization’ that characterized the dominant evangelical view of the Church’s mission.⁷⁸ This view asserted that evangelization was the *primary* way that the Church carried out her mission and that any social action was *secondary*. Despite efforts to recognize the latter, most evangelicals failed to address the important problem of evangelistic prioritisation.

Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1976). For more background information on the Covenant, see: Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: Global*, 209-29; Jim Reapsome, "Lausanne Movement," in *EDWM*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

⁷⁴ Costas’s paper was published as: Orlando E. Costas, "Depth in Evangelism: An Interpretation of ‘In-Depth Evangelism’ around the World," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, ed. James Douglas (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1975). Some of Costas’s colleagues from Latin America who also contributed papers or addresses Congress were: René Padilla, Samuel Escobar, J. Andrew Kirk, and Jorge Leon. His appraisal can be found in: Orlando E. Costas, "A Sign of Hope: A Latin American Appraisal of Lausanne ’74," *Latin America Evangelist* 54:6 (1974): 2-3, 10.

⁷⁵ I can find only two place where Costas refers to this *ad hoc* committee: Costas, "Sign of Hope," 10, and a brief comment buried in a footnote: Costas, *TheologyCrossroads*, 43, fn. 47.

⁷⁶ Douglas, ed., *Let Earth Hear*, 1294-296. The Radical Discipleship Group’s “A Response to Lausanne: The Statement on Radical Discipleship” can also be found in: Rene Padilla and Chris Sugden, eds, *Texts on Evangelical Social Ethics 1974-1983 (i)* (Bramcote, Nottingham: Grove Books Ltd., 1985), 7-11; *International Review of Mission* 63 (1974): 574-76; Christopher Sugden, *Radical Discipleship* (London: Marshalls, 1981): 172-76.

⁷⁷ A taped interview with Tom Houston, 7 June 1993, cited by: Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: Global*, 228-29.

⁷⁸ Costas, "Sign of Hope," 10.

Costas revealed that this problem was the main reason that the *ad hoc* group presented a response to the Congress that was signed by many of the Congress participants, including Stott.⁷⁹ Costas wrote that the group's document was 'indeed a major corrective to the "syndrome of evangelistic prioritization."' It promoted 'an integral view of the gospel *and* of the missionary mandate, repudiating as "demonic the attempt to drive a wedge between evangelism and social action.'"⁸⁰ Of the Congress itself Costas wrote:

The fact that a response of this nature was immediately produced by responsible participants as a corrective to a fundamental weakness of the official document of the congress gave Lausanne '74 the distinctive character of a sign of hope in sometimes rigid, inflexible and polarized church. This more than anything made the congress rise above its obvious limitations: its Western domination, its closed organizational structure and its limited democratic process.⁸¹

At the 1974 Lausanne Congress, radical evangelicals from around the world identified themselves, challenged First World evangelical missions, and, as a result of the pastoral leadership of Stott, remained connected to the larger worldwide evangelical fellowship. And Costas contributed to that.

Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord

In a 1981 article Costas described his theological orientation as *radical evangelical*.⁸² The purpose of the article was to interact with the earliest and most central affirmation of the Christian faith, the confession *Jesus Christ is Lord*.⁸³ The key issue was whether 'the Lordship of Jesus Christ mean[t] anything outside one's personal faith.' He addressed the question 'from a Latin American Christological perspective and a radical evangelical theological commitment.'

Costas's 'Latin American Christological perspective' meant he examined the issue of the 'Lordship of Christ from within the world of the oppressed and disfranchised.'⁸⁴ He

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid. The italicised word is so in Costas's text.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Orlando E. Costas, "A Radical Evangelical Contribution from Latin America," in *Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981), 133-56. Two responses and Costas reply to them follow the article: *ibid.*, 156-70.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 133. Costas cited 1Cor. 12:3, Rom. 10:9.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* Costas referred to the following Latin American Christological studies: Leonardo Boff, "Jesucristo liberado: Una visión cristológica desde Latinoamérica oprimida" in *Jesucristo en la Historia y en la Fe*, ed. A. Vargas-Machuca (Salamanca / Madrid: Ediciones Sígueme / Fundación Juan March, 1977); *idem*, *Jesus Christ Liberator*, trans. Patrick Hughes (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1978); José Míguez-Bonino, *Jesús: Ni Vencido Ni Monarca Celestial* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1977); Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach*, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis 1978). For other more recent Latin American Christologies, see: Julio Lois, "Christology in the Theology of Liberation," in *Mysterium Liberationis*, ed. Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 168-94; José Míguez-Bonino, ed., *Faces of Jesus: Latin American Christologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984); Juan

also stressed his connection with other Christians of a ‘radical evangelical theological commitment.’⁸⁵ He reflected on the issue of the Lordship of Christ in the struggle ‘against social and cultural oppression (racism and elitism), economic exploitation (capitalism), and political domination (imperialism and hegemonism).’⁸⁶ Christians were challenged to engage with the socio-political and economic realities of the continent. Such Christian action would contribute to the building of ‘a radically new order characterised by social equality and integral cultural development, an economy grounded on cooperation and social well-being (and not on competition and selfish profit-making), and an authentic participatory democracy.’ There was a socio-economic aspect to his perspective on the Church’s engagement with the world.

Costas further clarified what he meant by the term ‘radical evangelical.’⁸⁷ The radical evangelical Christian lived out ‘Christ’s Lordship’ in the following way: he or she understood Christ ‘from the witness of the canonical Scriptures, through the hermeneutical mediation of exegesis, historical studies, and the social sciences, motivated by a personal encounter with [Christ] and verified in a life of radical discipleship amid the struggles of history.’

The Lordship of Christ was experienced by looking at him from the lenses of the people on the ‘underside of history’ and from the witness of the canonical scriptures.⁸⁸ These perspectives, in turn, shaped what it meant to be a radical evangelical. He considered Christ from ‘below’ and from ‘before’⁸⁹ extended it to the commitment to the poor and

Luis Segundo, *Jesus of Nazareth, Yesterday and Today*, 5 vols. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984-1988); Jon Sobrino, *Jesus in Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987).

⁸⁵ Some of those that Costas recognised as expressing this radical evangelical orientation were: Samuel Escobar and John Driver, *Christian Mission and Social Justice* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1978); Andrés Kirk, *Jesucristo Revolucionario* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1974); Alfred Krass, *Five Lanterns at Sundown: Evangelism in a Chastened Mood* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1978); C. René Padilla, *El Evangelio Hoy* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Certeza, 1975); Jim Wallis, *The Call to Conversion: Recovering the Gospel for These Times* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981); Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*. He also identified two of his works that he considered radical evangelical: *The Church and Its Mission* and *The Integrity of Mission*.

⁸⁶ Costas, "RadEvangelical," 133-4.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 134.

⁸⁸ Regarding the ‘underside of history’ Costas cited: Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología desde el Reverso de la Historia* (Lima: Centro de Publicaciones, 1977). The term referred to the world of the disfranchised and marginalized (Costas, "RadEvangelical," 134).

⁸⁹ Costas did not limit his use of ‘from below’ as ‘from the investigation of the historical Jesus’ (ibid., 155, citing from: Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man* (London: SCM, 1968), 53. Costas referred to the christologies ‘from below’ as arising ‘out of the concrete experience and praxis of faith within a lived commitment to liberation...’ (Sobrino, *Christology*, 10), and those emerging from a ‘concrete encounter with the poor, “which is the privileged place where Christ reveals the mystery of his person”’ (Raúl Vidales, *Desde la Tradición de los Pobres* (Mexico City: Centro de Reflexión Teológica, 1978), 124). He also appreciated the christological approach of: James Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 108ff.

oppressed, and then coupled it to a reading of the scriptures.⁹⁰ Therefore, only by interpreting scriptures and committing one's self to the poor in a concrete historical context could one know the Lordship of Christ.

The Insistence of New Evangelicals on the Priority of Biblical Authority

In 1987 Costas claimed that biblical authority was New Evangelicalism's key issue during most of the 20th century.⁹¹ New Evangelicals shared with other Protestant traditions the essential Protestant principles of biblical authority and salvation in Christ through faith. But even though the New Evangelicals claimed both principles, they placed primary importance on the former as their primary principle that distinguished them from other Protestants. The problem, Costas insisted, was that they concentrated their efforts so much on inspiration and authority of Scripture that they neglected the Bible's teaching. The doctrine of the authority of Scripture became the identifying issue to which the New Evangelicals rallied.⁹² It appeared that they likened the debates on the inspiration and authority of the Bible to the ancient Church debates over creedal issues of the Trinity and the nature of Christ.

Costas was not surprised that Carl F. H. Henry, the most published New Evangelical at the time, entitled his six-volume theology, *God, Revelation and Authority*.⁹³ Since the Protestant Reformation, evangelicals, like many other Protestants, have affirmed that the Scriptures were the primary authority in matters of faith and practice. The Scriptures—not the Pope, the Church, tradition, nor reason—were the ultimate source of authority. But only for New Evangelicals and evangelicals from the other groups were the Bible's authority and inspiration the primary issues around which all other theological issues revolved. It was the great debate among evangelicals during the 1970s and 1980s.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Costas again followed Cone who 'locates the meaning of Jesus Christ not only in the social existence of Black people in the United States but also in the witness of Scripture as it has been handed down in the church's tradition' (Cone, *GodOppressed*, 110-12), Costas, "RadEvangelical," 155, footnote 5, referring to: Cone, *GodOppressed*, 10-12.

⁹¹ Costas, "Evangelical Theology (1987), 68-9.

⁹² The New Evangelicals expressed 'born again' faith by affirming orthodox creedal Christianity, undertaking serious intellectual endeavours, engaging relevant ethical and political activity, and cooperating with the mainline Protestant denominations [Gabriel J. Fackre, *The Religious Right and Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982), 6].

⁹³ Costas, "Evangelical Theology (1987), 69. Costas referred to: Carl Ferdinand Howard Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 6 vols. (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1976).

⁹⁴ For a basic understanding of the New Evangelical position on issues of scriptural authority, see: P.D. Feinberg, "Bible, Inerrancy and Infallibility of," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984); H.D. McDonald, "Bible, Authority of" in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984). For selected books representing the New Evangelical position during Costas's lifetime, see: D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, *Scripture and Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1983); Norman L.

Biblical Authority and Evangelicals from the Two Thirds World

Costas acknowledged that evangelical theology that had developed in the North Atlantic region was exported to the Two Thirds World via the Western missionary enterprise, theological schools, and publications.⁹⁵ But he identified a critical difference between New Evangelicals and the evangelicals of the Two Thirds World. The former focused on questions of the Bible's authority and inspiration while the latter concentrated on the content of the gospel and the teaching of the scriptures. Costas argued that as a result of the latter view, Two Thirds World evangelicals were freed up to 'employ a contextual hermeneutics patterned after the transpositional method witnessed throughout the New Testament.'⁹⁶ As a result 'Evangelicals of the Two Thirds World are more willing to deal with questions of religious pluralism and social, economic and political oppression than most Evangelical theologians in the One Third World.'

Costas diagnosed that the problem with Evangelicals of the One Third World was that they were 'too obsessed' with philosophical challenges of the faith arising out of the Enlightenment.⁹⁷ As a result they were insensitive to 'the explosive, social, economic, political, cultural and religious reality of most people in the world.' He argued that almost all North Atlantic theologies were fixated on issues of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that centred on the 'issue of freedom from authority through faith.'⁹⁸ The primary theological concern of most of the theologies of the West had been on the reasonableness of the faith.

Because these theologies were so fixated on the issues of the first phase of the Enlightenment, they were not able to engage with its second phase: 'the the nineteenth century movement of freedom from political, cultural, economic and social oppression.'⁹⁹ These issues were not considered by most North Atlantic theologies, especially evangelical theologies. Costas wrote: "For all its missionary passion and experience, mainstream Evangelical theology in North America has yet to learn from its missionary heritage how to ask more central questions to the destiny of humankind, the future of the world, even the central concerns of the Scriptures.' Costas viewed that the North Atlantic theologies

Geisler, *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1980); John Warwick Montgomery and Ligonier Valley Study Center, *God's Inerrant Word: An International Symposium on the Trustworthiness of Scripture* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974); Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield and Samuel G. Craig, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co, 1948).

⁹⁵ Costas, "Evangelical Theology (1987)," 74.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 75.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

in general were concerned with the absence of faith and its theoretical denial. But he also pointed out that ‘from the Evangelical Awakening to the present, there have been Euro-American theologies and theological movements that have sought to address the problem of the practical denial of faith in the unjust treatment of the weak and the downtrodden.’

Costas provided a list of both Evangelicals and mainline Protestants from the mid-eighteenth century to Costa’s time who had taken up the cause of the faith and the poor and oppressed.¹⁰⁰ In Costa’s view the theologies of these Christians were in alignment with ‘a fundamental concern of any theology of the Two Thirds World, namely, the cry of the oppressed and the disclosure of the practical “unbelief” of professing Christians who oppress their neighbours.’ Costas wrote that he was aware of some discussion on issues of poverty, marginalisation, injustice, oppression, and religious pluralism between some evangelical theologians in the First World and colleagues in the Two Thirds World.¹⁰¹

The dividing issue among different evangelical perspectives was not whether the Bible was the Word of God or not, because for all types of evangelicals, Scripture was God’s Word. The critical issue was from which perspective was the Bible to read: from the perspective of the rich or from that of the poor and oppressed. There were Two Thirds World evangelicals who were intentionally reading the written Word of God from the perspective of the latter.

Costas contended that, as important as the nature of the authority of the Bible was, it was not the only critical issue. He joined other Two Thirds World Christians, evangelical and non-evangelical alike, who were concerned that Christians who proclaimed the inerrancy of the Bible could forget about the poor and become allies with powers and authorities who oppress the poor and commit injustices. To Costas and others from the Two Thirds World this appeared as nothing more than practical atheism and as unbelief in the God who, according to the Scriptures, was on the side of the poor and the oppressed. Be-

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. The theologies of the following movements or people reflect on the critical issues of injustice and the Christian faith: the Wesley brothers, George Finney’s Oberlin theology, the Social Gospel, the early Reinhold Niebuhr, Jürgen Moltmann, J.B. Metz, Robert McAfee Brown, and various evangelical groups committed to peace and justice issues.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 75-6. As an example Costas recognised the participation of two North Americans at the First Conference of Evangelical Mission Theologians, meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1982 (See above in this chapter). Ron Sider and David Cook, two Western theologians, presented papers at the conference. The papers of twelve Two Thirds World Evangelical theologians along with the two presentations from the Western theologians were collected and published Samuel Sugden, eds., *Sharing Jesus*. Costas also attended a consultation on the theme of ‘Context and Hermeneutics in the Americas,’ held in Tlayacapan, Mexico, 1983, where evangelical theologians from the First Third World and Two Thirds World met to discuss the issue. Papers, reports, and transcriptions were collected and published as: C. Rene Padilla and Mark Lau Branson, eds., *Conflict and Context: Hermeneutics in the Americas* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1986).

belief in the authority of the Bible should not lead one to consider first the issues of the Bible's authority and inspiration, but to read it from the perspectives of the poor and oppressed. Costas and others contended that it was not enough just to believe in the nature of Scripture, the point was to obey God's written Word as God transformed the world.

Costas ended his comparison of Two Thirds World Evangelical theologies with First World Evangelical theologies with a declaration regarding the marks of a healthy and lifegiving theology:

However, I submit that the ultimate test of any theological discourse is not erudite precision but transformative power. It is a question of whether or not theology can articulate the faith in a way that it is not only intellectually sound but spiritually energizing, and therefore, capable of leading the people of God to be transformed in their way of life and to commit themselves to God's mission in the world. As the Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthian church many years ago, 'the kingdom of God is not talk but power' (1Cor. 4:20).¹⁰²

As an evangelical, Costas firmly believed that the Scriptures were the written Word of God and therefore of primary authority. As with other Two Thirds World Evangelicals who affirmed the authority of the Bible, the key issue was not its inerrancy, but its power to transform and reflect new life in a world torn apart by sin.

Critical Comments

Costas identified himself as an evangelical. He affirmed the evangelical tenets, affirmed its heritage, and moved in evangelical circles. But he grew increasingly uncomfortable with the Conservative Evangelical mindset and ethos and found like-minded evangelicals among those who referred to themselves as Radical Evangelicals and Evangelicals from the Two Thirds World. As Costas critically engaged with various forms of Conservative Evangelical in his writings and interacted with other expressions of evangelicals, he began to formulate his own fresh expression of evangelicalism.

In Costas's new emerging evangelicalism, social action was as much of a means of evangelisation as preaching. It was more important to obey the teachings of Scripture rather than merely believing in it as the Word of God. Radical Christian discipleship meant a Christian was transformed in order to be an agent of transformation in society. The Christian life was not about talk, but about power in the Spirit. This new type of evangelical Christians heard the cry for justice of the poor and oppressed, addressed the critical issues concerning the destiny of humanity, and responded to the central issues identified in the scriptures.

¹⁰² Costas, "Evangelical Theology (1987)," 77.

Costas identified that the essential tenets of evangelicalism were the authority of Scripture, salvation by grace through faith, the necessity of conversion, and the verification of lively faith by the fruit of piety and moral discipline. He began to refine the fourth element of the verification of lively faith. Costas never really gave attention to piety and moral discipline as the fruit of lively faith, but he vigorously addressed the necessity of the Christian believer proclaiming the gospel in word and deed. It seems reasonable to expect that Costas replaced the rather tame former terms with the more energetic terms of the latter as the verification of lively faith. He never gave an indication that he had done this, but it does make sense.

The authority of Scripture, the first tenet of Costas's view of evangelicalism, also drew Costas's attention. It was not enough just to believe in authority of the Bible, its readers must obey its teachings. I contend that canonical Scripture is a divine text that has the authority to command the obedience of its readers and auditors. Considering Costas's challenge to obey biblical teachings, it can be assumed that he would have agreed with that. Costas emphasised that obedience of the Bible's teachings was a chief characteristic of the Radical Evangelical. Reflection on the texts leads to the following critical comments on his use of Scripture in his missiology.

Costas was obsessed with the 19th century Enlightenment's quest for liberation from every kind of oppression. He committed himself to critically engage with the socio-economic, political, and cultural issues of the day. Costas assumed he was able to address the central questions regarding humanity and the future of the world. He believed that he was able to identify the chief concerns of Scripture. Thus Costas became fixated on those who dwell on the periphery—the poor, suffering, and powerless because he perceived it was the primary concern of the God of the Bible. The periphery becomes the controlling narrative of Costas's life, thought, and action. But the result is that he is not able to see beyond that narrative. Everywhere Costas looks—whether it is in the Bible or in the world—all Costas could see were people of the periphery. By doing this, there is little regard for other issues to understand a biblical text. An example of this was Costas's handling of Christ outside the gate of Hebrews 13:12. He neglected any critical study of the passage and read the periphery narrative into it.

Costas claimed that Two Thirds World did not just believe the Bible, but sought to understand the gospel and the teachings of the Bible. Even though he did refer to Christ's death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins, his resurrection, and his ascension, in Costas's writings selected for this chapter, they did not play a part in the unfolding of his ar-

gument. There still is no certainty about what Costas meant by the gospel. Certainly he did bring to light scriptural texts on the poor and suffering and God's commitment to them. But he did not engage with biblical teaching that did not have a connection with the controlling narrative of God's concern for the poor and the oppressed. For example, Costas did not give much printed space to human sin, divine wrath, and divine pardon.

There is no indication in his writings up to his point that Costas would have desired to interact with Psalm 106's portrayal of Israel in the wilderness. In Egypt, Israel had been enslaved, oppressed, and treated unjustly. But Yahweh liberated Israel from bondage in Egypt and led her to the wilderness on the periphery between mighty ancient civilisations. Even though Israel pledged her allegiance to Yahweh, her relationship with her liberator was characterised by unceasing disobedience, unfaithfulness, rebellion, ingratitude, and seeking to shape life without God. Poor, suffering, marginalized Israel was even hostile to what Yahweh had done on their behalf. Except for Joshua and Caleb, the whole generation of Israel that Yahweh had mightily liberated from Egypt, perished in the periphery. There is no sense from Costas's writings that he would have engaged with this narrative. It does not fit with his controlling narrative of God's commitment to the poor and oppressed who live on the periphery of life.

Costas dismissed the New Evangelicals because they were fixated on the issues of the inspiration and authority of the Bible and thus were completely oblivious to the life and death issues of the majority world. They disobeyed biblical teachings and commands that Costas found so obvious. The reasons why New Evangelicals neglected the cries of the poor and oppressed are many and complex, and probably do not have much to do with their serious commitment to defend biblical authority. The biblical narratives reveal that God's liberated people took every opportunity to disobey divine teaching. Church history provides the same perspective. A measure of graciousness and respect on Costas's part would have been in order.

The inspiration and authority of Scripture were not at issue for Costas. The issue was to obey it. According to Costas, the New Evangelicals were fighting battles with the first phase of the Enlightenment and thus were irrelevant in a world filled with so much suffering and injustice. But the New Evangelicals saw it differently. They had been witnessing the gradual erosion of biblical authority over the course of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment eras. Thus Scripture was no longer a divine text that had the authority to command obedience of its readers and auditors, but a collection of written documents that expressed human experiences of the divine. There were also evangelicals who

affirmed the authority of the Bible in theory, but denied its authority in practice. The New Evangelicals had been addressing this slow erosion of biblical authority. They were responding to the critical challenge to the scriptures authority to command obedience. They also affirmed the unity and integrity of Scripture as a divine text, and thus took all of it seriously. New Evangelicals used the historical-grammatical method of exegesis to discover the original intent of a biblical text. Furthermore, not only was Scripture exegeted, but the reader or auditor was critically examined by the text as well. There was much that the New Evangelicals and the Radical Evangelical could have shared with one another. But he did not see it that way, and dismissed them.

Chapter Conclusions

Costas was critical of the different forms of North Atlantic evangelicalism. He envisioned Christian women and men who sought to live out the lordship of Christ as Radical Evangelicals. There were two ways by which they would understand the Jesus as Lord of their lives. The first way was by personally encountering Christ through the witness of the canonical scriptures. Radical Evangelicals would use the tools of exegesis, historical studies, and the social sciences to bring about the encounter with Christ. The second way was by reading the Bible from the perspective of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed and committing one's self to them in a concrete historical situation. Both ways together were necessary in order to personally know the Lordship of Christ. Radical Evangelicals' commitment to Jesus would be verified by living as a radical disciple who is engaged with the challenging realities of specific concrete historical situations. The fruit of their actions would be the establishment of a radically new social order characterised by justice and peace in every area of human society.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Evangelical Companions on the Journey

Costas's missiological writings reveal that he was concerned with the prioritisation of evangelism and the dichotomy between evangelism and social action, and that both of these issues were influential in the ways that evangelicalism in the latter half of the 20th century worked out her passion for evangelisation. But he was not alone in his concerns. Costas's itinerary intersected with the theological journeys of fellow evangelicals from both the Two Thirds World and the One Third World and their concerns about the same pressing issues. The purpose of this chapter is to trace how select evangelical congresses, consultations, and conferences that convened between 1966 and 1989 addressed the relationship between evangelism and social concern. There is no intention to examine Costas's contributions in the ones in which he did participate.

Evangelical Social Responsibility Following the Second World War

Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, two of Costas' colleagues, recognised that in the two decades following the end of the Second World War in 1945, there was an increase of reflection by evangelicals regarding social involvement.¹ They had become involved in relief work and social action, especially on the mission field. Evangelical missionaries served throughout the world in the areas of education and literacy, famine relief, agricultural issues, and medical work. Samuel and Sugden pointed out, however, that even though

evangelicals demonstrated laudable advances in social action, mission workers themselves usually saw these efforts as secondary. For them, the success of their efforts lay mainly in the impact of the gospel on individual lives rather than in the positive change in society brought about by their efforts.²

René Padilla, another one of Costas's colleagues, surveyed international evangelical mission conferences from Wheaton '66 to Wheaton '83.³ He concluded that 'a more

¹ Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, eds, *The Church in Response to Human Need* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co; Oxford: Regnum Books, 1987, viii.

² Ibid.

³ C. René Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility from Wheaton '66 to Wheaton '83," in *How Evangelicals Endorsed Social Responsibility: Texts on Evangelical Social Ethics 1974-83 (ii)—A Commentary*, ed. Padilla and Sugden (Bramcote, Nottingham: Grove Books Ltd., 1985): 4 -18. On the 'Contents'

wholistic approach to mission has slowly gained ground in evangelical circles.’⁴ The survey began with Wheaton ’66—The Congress on the Church’s Worldwide Mission—that convened in Wheaton, Illinois, in 1966.⁵ Padilla described the Congress as ‘a significant effort to rethink the Church’s mission on a world-wide scale.’ He especially noted ‘the presence of a good number of participants from the Two-Thirds World.’⁶ Less than 60 of the 1000 participants were from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, yet they presented papers, delivered addresses, and made a significant impact on the *Wheaton Declaration* that emerged from the Congress. The Declaration may have reflected a ‘new concern for social problems’ because of the influence of the participants from the Two Thirds World. Padilla concluded: ‘Clearly a new attitude with regard to Christian social responsibility was finding its way into evangelical circles at the time of the 1966 Wheaton Congress.’⁷

Padilla also surveyed the Berlin ’66 Congress, four regional congresses, and one declaration, all of which contributed to the continuing conversation regarding the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility that culminated in Lausanne ’74.⁸ The *Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern*, a 473-word document, was drafted at the 1973 Thanksgiving Workshop on Evangelicals and Social Concern in Chicago.⁹ According to Padilla, it was ‘[a] milestone in the awakening of the social conscience in the United States’ because it ‘was enthusiastically received by many people who saw in it clear evidence that evangelicals were transcending the traditional dichotomy between evangelism and social responsibility.’¹⁰

Lausanne ’74

The International Congress on World Evangelization that convened in Lausanne, in 1974, ‘turned out to be a definitive step in affirming that both evangelism and social responsibility are essential to the mission of the Church.’¹¹ Samuel and Sugden recognised that the Congress ‘affirmed the place of socio-political involvement in the mission of the

page of the book, Padilla’s article is listed as “How Evangelicals Endorsed Social Responsibility,” but the actual article is entitled “Evangelism and Social Responsibility from Wheaton ’66 to Wheaton ’83.” The latter is used when citing Padilla’s article.

⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 5.

⁷ Ibid., 5-6.

⁸ Ibid., 6-9.

⁹ Ibid., 9. For the full text of the declaration, see: Rene Padilla and Chris Sugden, eds., *Texts on Evangelical Social Ethics: 1974-1983 (i)* (Bramcote, Nottingham: Grove Books Ltd: 1985): 4-5. For the full text of the declaration and the papers presented at the workshop, see: Ronald J. Sider, ed., *The Chicago Declaration* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1974).

¹⁰ Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 9.

¹¹ Ibid., 10.

church.’¹² Furthermore, they pointed to the Radical Discipleship Group’s promotion of mission as ‘holistic in its *Response to Lausanne* statement. Thus social involvement was recognised as an integral aspect of the Church’s mission.

Padilla noted that at the Congress, the Church’s social responsibility was ‘one of the topics attracting the greatest attention’ from participants.¹³ In the Lausanne Covenant (LC), ‘it was given a place of prominence together with other subjects as dear to evangelicals as the authority of Scripture, the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, and evangelism.’ There were two significant implications for the mission of the Church. First, the LC dealt ‘a death blow to every attempt to reduce the mission of the Church to the multiplication of Christians and churches through evangelism.’¹⁴ Second, Padilla claimed that ‘[s]ocial involvement had finally been granted full citizenship in evangelical missiology, mainly under the influence of people from the Two-Thirds World.’

John Stott, the chair of the Lausanne Covenant drafting committee, had been going through a progressive shift of his missiological thinking in the decade leading up to the Lausanne Congress.¹⁵ He had come to affirm social responsibility as an integral component of mission. Based on his earlier reading of the three major texts of the resurrected Jesus Christ announcing the Great Commission, Stott confessed he had previously argued that ‘the mission of the church [...] is exclusively preaching, converting and teaching mission.’¹⁶ Acknowledging that he had gone through a process, he asserted that he was seeing ‘more clearly that not only the consequences of the commission but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibility, unless we are guilty of distorting the words of Jesus.’¹⁷ This affirmation found its way into the LC because of Stott’s significant position on the drafting committee.

Stott was encountering fellow evangelicals who were committed to missions and who were suspicious that the shift in his thinking was an indication that the Lausanne Movement was following the ecumenical WCC down a dangerous path.¹⁸ They feared that the Bible would no longer be honoured and that evangelism would be struck down as the

¹² Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Church in Response*, ix. Regarding the Lausanne Congress and the radical discipleship statement, see the section on ‘Radical Evangelicals at the 1974 Lausanne’ in chapter six of this thesis.

¹³ Padilla, ‘Evangelism and Social Responsibility,’ 10.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁵ Noted by Scott Moreau in: A. Scott Moreau, ‘Consultation on the Relationship Between Evangelism and Social Responsibility (CRESR ’82),’ in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

¹⁶ John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975): 23.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: A Global Ministry* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001): 303. Also noted in: Padilla, ‘Evangelism and Social Responsibility,’ 11.

priority of mission. Stott took steps to address concerns about his shift, especially those most forcefully expressed by Dr Arthur Johnston in his *The Battle for World Evangelism*.¹⁹ Stott was concerned that different groups within the evangelical community were becoming increasingly polarised from one another. Yet Padilla was able to observe that ' [i]n spite of its opponents, most them identified with the North American missionary establishment, the wholistic approach to mission continued to find support among evangelicals, especially in the Two-Thirds World.'²⁰

The International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle

The Consultation, co-sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) and World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF), convened in order to consider from a different angle the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility.²¹ The LC's Section 9 on 'The Urgency of the Evangelistic Task,' noted that '[m]ore than 2,700 million people, which is more than two-thirds of mankind, have yet to be evangelised.' It also expressed that '[a]ll of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it.' The section concluded with a pledge: 'Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple lifestyle in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism.' The consultation took place north of London in 1980 with 80 participants from 27 countries in order to work out the pledge.²² The result of their effort was 'An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle.'²³ Padilla described the expression of commitment as reflecting 'the growing consensus among evangelicals around the world on the intimate connection between the

¹⁹ Arthur P. Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale Houses, 1978). For more on Stott's perspective, see: Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 303.

²⁰ Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," 12.

²¹ WEF arose out of the visions and attempts by evangelicals in Britain, North America and Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries to establish unity among Christians. Since its formation in 1951, it has sought to nurture Christian unity, defend the gospel, and support world missions. Since Lausanne '74, WEF has worked co-operatively with the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization [David M. Howard, "World Evangelical Fellowship," in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000)]. For more on the WEF, see: Harold Fuller, *People of the Mandate: The Story of the World Evangelical Fellowship* (Carlisle: WEF in association with Paternoster, 1996).

²² The background to the consultation was compiled from: Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 300; Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," 12-3; John R. W. Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known: Historic Mission Documents from the Lausanne Movement, 1974-1989* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1997): xviii.

²³ The full text of the document can be found in: Padilla and Sugden, eds, *Texts (i)*, 17-22; Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, 139-53. The commitment document and the papers presented at the consultation were published as: Ronald J. Sider, ed., *Lifestyle in the Eighties: An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1982). Also see: Alan Nichols, *Exposition and Commentary of An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle*, Lausanne Occasional Papers 20 (Wheaton, IL: LCWE, 1980).

personal and social dimensions of the Gospel.’²⁴ The consultation was the latest evidence for Padilla that, ‘[q]uite clearly, evangelicals had turned a corner at Lausanne with regard to their understanding of the social implications of the Gospel.’²⁵

Pattaya ‘80

The Consultation on World Evangelism (COWE), sponsored by the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelism, took place in Pattaya, Thailand, in June 1980.²⁶ It drew over 800 participants. The title of the consultation was ‘How Shall They Hear?’ Seventeen mini-consultations focused on Christian witness to particular people groups (Introduction).²⁷

Evangelism was the dominant theme of the Thailand Statement, the document of the COWE. The Introduction highlighted Jesus’ command to proclaim the gospel to the people of the world. It expressed that the participants ‘have become freshly burdened by the vast numbers who have never heard the good news of Christ and are lost without him.’ There was a confession of shame for lack of vision and zeal, and for failure to live in the fullness of the gospel. The Introduction also drew attention to the masses of refugees and their suffering in the border region of Thailand. There was a call for Christians to denounce injustice and be sensitive to the plight of the refugees. ‘[A] solemn resolution’ was made that pledged that Christians would become more involved in various forms of service to the refugees around the world.

The first major issue addressed in the Statement was the mandate for world evangelisation (Section 1). The section began with a theological declaration that God creates and loves all people. Because of human rebellion, God also judges the human race. But God longs for their salvation and sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to save people from their sins. There is a declaration of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. The resurrected and exalted Son sends out believers in Jesus Christ as witnesses and servants. As witnesses, believers are commanded to carry out the evangelisation mandate. But in the same section, the witness aspect is paired with the servant aspect. Jesus Christ

²⁴ Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 12-3.

²⁵ Ibid., 13.

²⁶ For the background to COWE, see: Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, 155-64. For more on Pattaya 1980, see: A. Scott Moreau, “World Consultation on World Evangelization (Pattaya, 1980),” in *EDWM*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000). For Costas’s report on his participation on Pattaya, see: Orlando E. Costas, “Report on Thailand 80 (Consultation on World Evangelization),” *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin* 4 (1980): 4-7. For Costas’s comparison between the WCC’s 1980 Melbourne conference on mission and evangelism and the 1980 LCWE’s Pattaya conference, see: “A Prayer and a Question: Ecumenical Crosscurrents in Mission and Evangelism,” in Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982): 135-61. Costas described these meetings as ‘two of the most significant missiological events of the 1980s’ (ibid., 135).

²⁷ Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, starting at page 158.

calls believers ‘not only to obey him as Lord in every area of our lives, but also to serve as he served.’ Then there is a confession ‘that we have not sufficiently followed his example of love in identifying with the poor and hungry, the deprived and the oppressed.’ Citing the fifth paragraph of the Lausanne Covenant, Christians are exhorted to join with God in ‘concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression.’

At the end of the first section, the Statement speaks to the issue of evangelism in relation to social action (1). Both evangelism and social action are necessary for world evangelisation. But the next section addresses the primacy of evangelisation (2). Paragraph six of the Lausanne Covenant stated that ‘in the church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary.’ Social action was affirmed as integrally related to evangelism, but evangelism addressed the most tragic issue confronting humanity: alienation of humanity from their Creator and eternal death. It is ‘an inexcusable lack of human compassion’ when the Church does not commit herself to this urgent task.’ Section Two focuses on the ‘two-thirds of the world’s four and a half billion people who have had no proper opportunity to receive Christ.’ The call goes out for people from all countries that would communicate the gospel cross-culturally.

The concluding Section five sets forth a commitment to Christ. The first three of the twelve invite the signatories of the Statement to ‘pledge’ themselves ‘to *live* under the lordship of Christ,’ to *work* for the evangelization of the world, and to bear witness by word and deed to Christ and his salvation,’ and ‘to serve the needy and the oppressed, and in the name of Christ to seek for them relief and justice.’²⁸ In his historical introduction to the collection of historic Lausanne Movement mission documents, Stott explained that the Statement emphasised the urgency of taking the gospel to those who had not heard, but he noted that there were participants at the conference who found the Lausanne Covenant ‘insufficiently concerned for social justice.’²⁹ He was aware of the ‘Statement of Concerns’ that Costas was involved with while participating in the Consultation.

Padilla assessed the Thailand Consultation in particular and the Lausanne Movement in general.³⁰ He acknowledged the marked progress regarding an understanding of the Gospel’s call to social action. But he asserted that ‘it would not be difficult to prove’ that the organisers of the Pattaya Consultation had ‘made a special effort to ensure that the

²⁸ Ibid., 162, section five, points one to three. The italics are in the text.

²⁹ Ibid., xix.

³⁰ Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 13.

task of world evangelism was dealt with in isolation from social responsibility.’ According to Padilla, this meant that ‘the organizers were almost exclusively concerned with the “how” of the (verbal) communication of the Gospel to “people-groups around the world...”’³¹ He suggested that the consultation’s leadership kept tight control on the agenda in ‘fear that the discussion of the social aspect of Christian mission would again divert attention from evangelism, as had (supposedly) happened at Lausanne!’ But Padilla claimed that ‘despite all the problems, the Pattaya Consultation proved once again that the wholistic approach to mission is here to stay.’³²

The Heart of the Issue

Many evangelicals from both the First World and the Two Thirds World were concerned about the prioritisation of evangelism that fellow evangelicals defended. The key issue for both sides was the relationship between evangelism and social action in the Church’s mission. The issue had aroused heated discussion at the Lausanne Congress. None of the major emphases of the (LC) ‘had been the subject of more earnest debate than the issue of Christian social responsibility.’³³ In the opening address of the Lausanne Congress, Billy Graham had challenged the participants to clarify the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility.³⁴ The LC addressed the nature of evangelism in paragraph four and of Christian social responsibility in paragraph five, but had not attempted to state the relationship between the two.³⁵ Paragraph five of the LC did affirm that ‘that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty.’ Paragraph six, however, stated: ‘In the church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary.’ Padilla identified two pressing issues that emerged out of these three paragraphs of the LC: the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility, and the sense in which evangelism was primary.³⁶

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 15. For another missiological perspective other than Padilla’s on this and other post-Lausanne Congress consultations, see: James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church and Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 1987): 177-95. For another source for excerpts and full text of the documents of the consultations, see: James A. Scherer and Stephen B. Bevans, eds., *New Directions in Mission and Evangelization I: Basic Statements 1974-1991* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992): 260-91.

³³ Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 302.

³⁴ Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xix.

³⁵ An observation made by John Stott in: *ibid.*, xix.

³⁶ Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 15.

Grand Rapids '82

In order 'to settle this unnecessarily divisive issue,'³⁷ 50 international evangelical leaders convened at the Consultation on the Relationship Between Evangelism and Social Responsibility (CRESR) in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1982.³⁸ CRESR was co-sponsored by the LCWE and the WEF. It was composed of 50 evangelists, mission leaders, theologians, and missiologists. Stott noted that the diversity of the 50 participants 'did not augur well for the possibility of consensus.'³⁹ At the beginning of the Consultation 'conflicting opinions were voiced, even with stridency.' But after a period of listening respectfully to one another and identifying what was essential, 'the time for creative engagement arrived.'

Stott served as the main drafter of the Report and found himself hard pressed to offer a balanced statement.⁴⁰ Yet the participants had agreed to a 'great majority' of the Report.⁴¹ Johnston, who had expressed his concerns about the primacy of evangelism, was satisfied with the balance of the statement.⁴² Stott identified the fourth chapter as the most crucial of the Report.⁴³ It recognised a threefold relationship between social responsibility and evangelism: the former is a '*consequence*' of the latter, a '*bridge*' to evangelism, and a '*partner*' of evangelism. Words and works must be together. Evangelism is primary only to the extent that it deals with people's eternal destiny. Furthermore, evangelism is a logical priority because socially responsible Christians are the fruit of evangelism.

Padilla, who also participated in the CRESR, deemed the Report to be 'a milestone in the evangelical understanding of the Christian mission in the modern world.'⁴⁴ Evangelicals were addressing a divisive issue among themselves and he foresaw that its resolution would be a further step in the process of 'the renewal of evangelical missiology.' He stated that after a 'long and painful course' that the group took, it was '[a]lmost as if by a miracle' that the Report lined up with the LC's affirmation that 'evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty.' Padilla commented:

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ For the background of the Consultation, see: Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 302-03; Moreau, "Consultation;" Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xix-xx.

³⁹ Ibid., xix.

⁴⁰ Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 303.

⁴¹ Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xix. The full report can be found in: *ibid.*, 165-213. The revised papers presented at the CRESR and select responses are available in: Bruce J. Nicholls, ed., *In Word and Deed: Evangelism and Social Responsibility* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1985).

⁴² Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 303.

⁴³ Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xix-xx.

⁴⁴ Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," 15-6.

Only the Spirit of God could have enabled the participants to overcome their fear and to allow space for a position in which evangelism and social responsibility are no longer conceived of as in opposition to one another but as united in a partnership which is 'in reality, a marriage'. As the Report puts it, 'evangelism and social responsibility, while distinct from one another, are integrally related in our proclamation of and obedience to the Gospel'.⁴⁵

Padilla especially appreciated what he considered the Report's unique and helpful understanding of the primacy of evangelism.⁴⁶ It did not mean that evangelism is more important than social responsibility in an absolute sense; but it did mean that evangelism is primary in a relative sense. Therefore 'no room is left for the notion that social responsibility may be dispensed with. In fact, the Report admits that the choice between evangelism and social responsibility is "largely conceptual".'

Evangelical Mission Theologians from the Two Thirds World

In 1982 Costas served as vice chair of the First Conference of Evangelical Mission Theologians from the Two Thirds World in Bangkok, Thailand. Twenty-five missiologists from Africa, Asia, the United Kingdom, North America and Latin America convened to consider emerging Two Thirds World christologies.⁴⁷ Costas examined the historical context of the conference in his keynote address, 'Proclaiming Christ in the Two Thirds World'.⁴⁸

Costas referred back to the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation's (LCWE) 1980 Consultation on World Evangelism (COWE) in Pattaya, Thailand. During the consultation, representatives from both the Third World and the First World circulated a statement of concern that was quickly endorsed by nearly a third of the participants at the consultation and then presented to the LCWE executive committee.⁴⁹ The statement reminded the committee that the Lausanne Covenant affirmed that 'evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty' and that Christians 'should

⁴⁵ Ibid., 16.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ A collection of the fourteen papers presented at the conference and two more analytical chapters was published as: Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, eds., *Sharing Jesus in the Two Thirds World: Evangelical Christologies from the Contexts of Poverty, Powerlessness and Religious Pluralism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1983). David M. Gitari, the chair of the conference, described it as 'a historic meeting. It was the first time that theologians of evangelical conviction from the Two Thirds World had met at their own initiative to focus attention on what Jesus from Galilee means in their own contexts and in their attempt to fulfil his mission' (ibid., vii).

⁴⁸ Orlando E. Costas, "Proclaiming Christ in the Two Thirds World," in idem., 1-11.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 1. The complete text of the "Statement of Concern on the Future of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization" can be found in: Padilla and Sugden, eds., *Texts (i)*, 22-25; J. Andrew Kirk, *A New World Coming: Looking Afresh at the Gospel for Today* (Basingstoke: Marshalls, 1983): 148-51.

share God's concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression.'⁵⁰

Costas quoted directly from the statement regarding the implementation of the affirmations above:

It is a fact, nevertheless, that outside of a few noble commendable efforts the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE) does not seem to have been seriously concerned with the social, political and economic issues in many parts of the world that are a great stumbling block to the proclamation of the Gospel. This is clearly evident here at Pattaya, Thailand during this Consultation on World Evangelization.⁵¹

The statement expressed the hope that,

to be an effective mobilizing agent for the evangelization of the world, the LCWE (as the visible expression of the Lausanne Movement) will have to give guidelines to Christians in many parts of the world who are wrestling with the problems of racial, tribal and sexual discrimination, political imperialism, economic exploitation, and physical and psychological harassment of totalitarian regimes of whatever ideology and the liberation struggles that are the consequences of such violent aggression.⁵²

The statement then urged the LCWE to carry out four proposals:⁵³

- 1) enable new leadership to equip evangelicals to be faithful to God's call to both social responsibility and evangelism;
- 2) establish study groups that offer specific guidance on socio-political and economic issues, working for justice and reconciliation, and seeking liberation from every form of oppression;
- 3) convene a World Congress on Evangelical Social Responsibility;
- 4) provide guidance on confronting fellow evangelicals who justify oppression and discrimination with the gospel so that they would repent and live according to biblical truth, and on supporting Christians who are in situations of oppression to remain faithful to the gospel.

Costas and other evangelical colleagues were disappointed with the LCWE's response.⁵⁴ They questioned whether the LCWE was committed to the whole of the Lausanne Covenant. Costas and several colleagues formed a group that began planning for a conference that would address three key issues. First, they saw 'that at the bottom of the evangelistic question there was a Christological problem: what does it mean to proclaim Jesus Christ in a world divided along racial and class differences?' A conference would

⁵⁰ Costas, "Proclaiming," 1. The statement referred to section 5 of the Lausanne Covenant.

⁵¹ Ibid., 1-2.

⁵² Ibid., 2.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

address that issue. Second, this Christological issue was of critical importance to evangelical Christians in the Two Thirds World. This term referred to the oppressed peoples on every continent of the world. Third, they decided ‘to reflect on this and similar questions as evangelicals from the Two Thirds World without strings attached, whether organizational, financial, or ideological.’

The group formed the Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians from the Two Thirds World and planned its first conference to consider the issues of proclaiming Christ in the Two Thirds World. Costas addressed the reasons for the conference:⁵⁵

We meet as evangelical Christians seeking to understand what it means to proclaim the name of Christ in a religiously pluralistic world surrounded by situations of poverty, powerlessness, and oppression. We come together not just with a theological but especially with a missiological concern. Our goal is to help the evangelical movement in general and our respective churches in particular to bear a more biblically faithful, spiritually authentic, and socio-culturally relevant witness to Jesus Christ in the Two Thirds World. To reach this goal, we need first to understand the problem of proclaiming Christ in the Two Thirds World.⁵⁶

Sharing Jesus in the Two Thirds World is the collection of presentations by Two Thirds World evangelicals on the theme expressed in the title. It was evident that a new expression of evangelicalism was emerging. And Costas was part of that process.

Wheaton ’83

This section is specifically concerned with only one of the three tracks at an international conference referred to as Wheaton ’83. The track was the Consultation on the Church in Response to Human Need (CCRHN).⁵⁷ The larger conference, Wheaton ’83, was sponsored by the WEF, and convened under the theme of ‘I Will Build My Church.’ Its purpose was to bring together Christian leaders from all over the world to discuss key issues related to the life and mission of the Church. Wheaton ’83 carried on with the tradition of three past Congresses: Wheaton ’66, Berlin ’66, and Lausanne ’74; and two more recent Consultations: Pattaya ’80 and Grand Rapids ’82.⁵⁸ There were 59 countries represented by 336 participants, 60% of whom were from the non-Western world. Three tracks focused on a variety of issues concerning the nature of the Church’s mission and the place of evangelism and discipleship in mission.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Background material and commentary on the Consultation were compiled from three sources: A. Scott Moreau, “Wheaton ’83,” in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 16-7; Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Church in Response*, xi.

⁵⁸ Moreau, “Wheaton ’83.”

Nearly 100 representatives participated in the CCRHN, the third track that focused on the issues of evangelism and social responsibility in the Church's mission. Padilla valued the Consultation because it confirmed 'the marriage' between evangelism and social responsibility that had come out of Grand Rapids '82.⁵⁹ For Samuel and Sugden, the Consultation addressed issues 'about the place of the poor in God's plan, about God's purpose and the movement of human history, about the nature of the gospel of the kingdom, and about the interrelation of the gospel and culture.'⁶⁰ At the Consultation, participants delivered papers that related these issues to transformation and the Church's mission. The papers were collected and edited by Samuel and Sugden and published as *The Church in Response to Human Need*.

The Wheaton '83 statement, 'Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need,' emerged out of the Consultation.⁶¹ In June 1983 representatives from Christian congregations, mission organisations, and Christian aid agencies gathered together in consultation for the purpose of praying about and reflecting on 'the church's task in response to human need' (Introduction). There were representatives from affluent areas and others from 'situations of poverty, powerlessness, and oppression.' They had shared their lives with one another, studied Scripture together, received papers on development and transformation, and considered the different ways to respond to human need in the world. Even though evangelism was perceived as the only way to address the most basic of human needs—fellowship with God—the statement emphasised that evangelism was not a separate theme, but 'an integral part of our Christian response to human need (Matt. 28:18-21).'

Christian social involvement is the topic of the first section (I). Evasion of social involvement by Christians is not an option, even for those who claim their sole calling is evangelism (I.3). Any non-involvement is tacit approval of the *status quo*: 'there is no escape: either we challenge the evil structures of society or we support them.' It is, therefore, a Christian duty to become involved with the socio-economic and political issues of society.

This sense of Christian led the participants at CCRHN to wrestle with different views of development and developmentalism (II.6). Many people of the Two Thirds World identified the latter term 'with an ideologically motivated process of change' that stim-

⁵⁹ Padilla, "Evangelism and Social Responsibility," 16.

⁶⁰ Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Church in Response*, xi.

⁶¹ The full text of the statement is printed in: Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Church in Response*, 254-65; Scherer and Bevans, eds., *New Directions I*: 281-91.

ulated economic growth, but ignored the structural issues that led to increased poverty, dependency, and inequality. But the term ‘transformation’ conveyed the sense that the participants wanted: the term ‘[did] not have a suspect past’ and it ‘point[ed] to a number of changes that have to take place in many societies if poor people are to enjoy their rightful heritage in creation’(II.9).

Thus the key theme of CCRHN was identified: transformation. But the participants made it clear in the statement that ‘both the goals and the process of transformation should be seen in the light of the Good News about Jesus, the Messiah’ (II.10). Seen from this perspective then, ‘transformation is the change from a condition of human existence contrary to God’s purposes to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God (John 10:10; Col. 3:8-15; Eph. 4:13)’ (II.11). This only happens if persons and communities obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus changes women and men by releasing them from sin and making them ‘new creatures in Christ’ (2Cor. 5:17) who are empowered to love God and other people (Rom. 5:5).

The statement offered ‘the biblical vision of the Kingdom of God’ as the goal of transformation (II.13). The kingdom is ‘a new way of being human in submission to the Lord of all...’ The rest of the document expounds the implications of transformation for biblical faith and the Church’s mission. In the other sections of the statement, transformation was reflected upon in terms of creation (III) and culture (IV); social justice and mercy, especially to the poor of the world (V); and the local church (VI), Christian aid agencies (VII), and the Church’s mission (VIII). Of interest to this thesis is the statement from the section on social justice and mercy:

Because God is just and merciful, hating evil and loving righteousness, there is an urgent need for Christians in the present circumstances to commit ourselves to acting in mercy and seeking justice. The mission of the church includes both the proclamation of the Gospel and its demonstration. We must therefore evangelize, respond to immediate human needs, and press for social transformation. (V.26)

Padilla asserted that the statement ‘viewed the *whole of human life* as subject to the transforming power of God’ and ‘affirmed the inevitability of political involvement...’⁶² Scherer and Bevans viewed it ‘the landmark evangelical document on the biblical relationship between gospel ministry and the kingdom of God.’⁶³ Samuel and Sugden also called it a ‘landmark’ because ‘it represents a commitment to the ministry of the gospel

⁶² Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 16. The italics are in Padilla’s text.

⁶³ Bevans and Scherer, eds., *New Directions I*, 281.

of the kingdom to brings change at all levels among every people.’⁶⁴ Padilla also picked up on the place of the kingdom of God in the statement: ‘By emphasizing that the Kingdom of God is “both present and future, both societal and individual, both physical and spiritual”, it laid a sound theological basis for the mission of the Church, with no dichotomy between evangelism and social responsibility.’⁶⁵

Padilla identified ‘an evangelical social conscience’ that was formed by a process that began with Wheaton ’66 and concluded with Wheaton ’83.⁶⁶ He perceived that ‘a more wholistic approach to mission has slowly gained ground in evangelical circles.’⁶⁷ It was becoming increasingly ‘evident to evangelicals that evangelism cannot be divorced from meaningful involvement with people with all their needs.’⁶⁸ It was also recognised that ‘people from the Two-Thirds World played a decisive role.’

Lausanne II and the Manila Manifesto

In July 1989, fifteen years after the first Lausanne Congress, the first cycle of the ongoing Lausanne Movement came to a conclusion at the second Lausanne Congress.⁶⁹ More than 3500 participants from 190 countries convened in Manila for the second International Congress on World Evangelization. As it had been at Lausanne I, the relationship between proclamation of the gospel and social concern was again a significant issue at Lausanne II.

The Manila Manifesto (MM) was received and accepted by the participants at Lausanne II. Stott, who chaired the drafting committee, stated that the purpose of the MM was to elaborate and clarify the LC fifteen years later.⁷⁰ It essentially expressed the continuing commitment of the Lausanne Movement to the LC. ‘Nevertheless,’ Stott added, ‘a careful study of MM, which is twice as long as LC, shows that it goes beyond it in a

⁶⁴ Samuel and Sugden, eds., *Church in Response*, xi.

⁶⁵ Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility,” 17.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 17.

⁶⁹ Background material was compiled from: Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 303-05; Jim Reapsome, “Lausanne Congress II on World Evangelization,” in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xx-xxii; Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 222-23. For the compendium of Lausanne II documents, see: J. D. Douglas, ed., *Proclaim Christ Until He Comes* (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1990). For the story of the Congress, see: Alan Nichols, ed., *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World* (Wheaton, IL: LCWE and Regal Books, 1989).

⁷⁰ Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 304; Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xx. For the full text of the MM, see: ibid., 225-249; Scherer and Bevans, eds., *New Directions I*, 292-305; Douglas, ed., *Proclaim Christ*.

number of important ways.’⁷¹ The twenty-one affirmations at the beginning of the *MM* elaborate and go beyond what was stated in the LC.

After a brief introduction, the *MM* lists the affirmations. There is a strong Christological sense to the affirmations as well as to the whole document. Several of the affirmations address issues relating to the poor and social justice. The signers of the Manifesto committed themselves to ‘demonstrat[ing] God’s love visibly by caring for those who are deprived of justice, dignity, food, and shelter’ (affirmation 8). Because of God’s kingdom of justice and peace, there is the demand for those committed to the *MM* to denounce all injustice and oppression and witness prophetically (9). Local congregations are challenged to turn ‘outward to its local community in evangelistic witness and compassionate service’ (16). All church, mission, and other Christian organisations are called upon to ‘to cooperate in evangelism and social action, ...’(17).

These select affirmations are then elaborated in section 4 on ‘The Gospel and Social Responsibility.’ Throughout the first paragraph of the section there is a strong sense of obligation and demand: the gospel ‘must become visible in transformed lives;’ ‘we must be involved in loving service’ as the love of God is proclaimed; and ‘we must be committed to [the kingdom of God’s] demands of justice and peace’ as the kingdom is preached. The second paragraph of the fourth section affirms the primacy of evangelism because the chief concern is that every person would have an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Jesus, however, did not proclaim the kingdom only, ‘he also demonstrated its arrival by works of mercy and deeds.’ Therefore, believers are called to evangelise in word and deed by preaching and teaching, ministering to the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for prisoners, helping the disadvantaged, and delivering the oppressed. Indeed, ‘good news and good works are inseparable.’

Those who signed the *MM* obligated themselves to prophetically denounce everything that was contrary to God’s kingdom (paragraph 3). It is recognised that ‘the biblical gospel has inescapable social implications’ (4). ‘True mission,’ therefore, ‘should always be incarnational.’ This means ‘entering humbly into other people’s worlds, identifying with their social reality, their sorrow and suffering, and their struggles for justice against oppressive powers.’ The section ends with a note of repentance and then of commitment to ‘seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness’ (5).

According to Stott, the *MM*’s purpose was to clarify the trajectory of the Lausanne Movement since Lausanne ’74.⁷² He specifically mentioned the Manifesto’s intention to

⁷¹ Stott, ed., *Making Christ Known*, xx.

unite evangelism and social action rather than separate the duo. It was also meant to contend with the perception that the LC was promoting a newer version of the social gospel of theological liberalism. The MM was intended to reaffirm that evangelism was primary in the Church's mission. Stott reported that 'an overwhelming majority of delegates' voted in favour of the Manifesto with 'only a tiny handful' voting against it.⁷³ His sense was that both conservative evangelicals and radical ones were satisfied with the MM. For the latter group, social action was indispensable to the Church's mission because good works made the good news visible. Even Arthur Johnston, who had been critical of what he perceived to be the Lausanne Movement's drift towards a more holistic sense of mission, approved of the MM.⁷⁴

Chapter Conclusions

Since the end of the Second World War in 1945, evangelicals have been on a theological itinerary in which they have wrestled with the relationship between evangelism and social action. The CGM, Peter Beyerhaus, Arthur Johnston, and other more conservative evangelicals sought to preserve evangelism as primary and social action as secondary. A growing number of evangelicals from both the One Third World and the Two Thirds World sought to put to an end to the dichotomy between evangelism and social action. The issue of the relationship was taken up into the evangelical missiological journey during the first two decades immediately following WW II, and became prominent at Lausanne '74 and in the LC. After the Congress, LCWE- and WEF-sponsored consultations and conferences followed the itinerary by addressing the issue in relation to the LC.

The theological itinerary made slow, yet unrelenting progress as the conservative evangelicals and their more radical counterparts engaged with one another about the issue. By the time of Wheaton '83, it was evident that the dichotomy in mission between evangelism and social action was no longer the heated issue that it once had been. A holistic sense of mission had come to the fore among evangelicals from the majority world as well as for those from the minority world. Social implications of the gospel were identified and both evangelism and social action were viewed as Christian duties. The Church's mission included socio-political engagement. Evangelicals from the Two Thirds World had been at the forefront of making this happen. Padilla identified a process between Wheaton '66 and Wheaton '83 by which an evangelical social ethic was

⁷² Dudley-Smith, *JSGlobal*, 304-05.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

being formed, but he would not have known of Manila '89. I would extend the process to Lausanne II. The Congress did not so much contribute new reflection to the resolution of the issue as much as locking the advances of previous 40 years, especially those that emerged out of Wheaton '83, into the evangelical social conscience. The '89 Congress reaffirmed that evangelism and social action were the essential elements of Christian holistic mission. Evangelism was primary, but only in a logical and relative sense, and certainly not in an absolute sense. The dual nature of mission was founded on Scripture; it was not related to the theologically liberal social gospel. It was clear that as a result of a missiological journey that had been underway for twenty-five years, evangelicals were engaging the world through a more holistic practice of mission. Some evangelicals might have been disappointed that the MM had not gone far enough, but it does reflect that evangelicals were continuing on a missiological journey leading to a holistic view of mission.

An examination of the congresses, consultations, and conferences during the period from 1950 to 1990 also reveals the emergence of a new form of evangelicalism. It has especially been shaped by contributions from evangelicals from the Two Thirds World, but there was considerable input from evangelicals from the North Atlantic region as well. They sought to evangelise in word and deed the majority of the world's population that lived in contexts of poverty, powerlessness, and religious pluralism. This new expression of evangelicalism emphasized a holistic view of the Church's mission. Mission that engaged with the socio-political realities of society was as much a Christian duty as the proclamation of the gospel. It combined the evangelical passion for evangelisation and the evangelical activism for social action. The social action aspect was no longer relegated to a secondary position, but coupled with evangelism as the dual priorities of the Church's mission. This new expression of evangelicalism presented to the world the gospel in both word and deed, and mission as both proclamation and social action. The MM revealed that this new form of evangelicalism had been accepted into the heart of the global evangelical community.

Not only was 1989 the year that Lausanne II convened, but it was also the year that Costas's *Liberating News* was posthumously published. In his book, Costas presented a holistic view of evangelisation and expressed this new form of evangelicalism. It is to Costas's *Liberating News* that we now turn to in the next chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER EIGHT

***Liberating News:* A Third World Evangelical Missiology**

Lausanne II convened in Manila and issued the Manila Manifesto in 1989, the same year that Costas's *Liberating News* was posthumously published. Costas died in November 1987. Near the end of his life, he had scribbled a note: 'The practice of evangelization has been the passion of my ministerial career....'¹ The words reveal that evangelisation was at the heart of who Costas was and what he did. This chapter examines his *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization*—that was unfinished at the time of Costas's death—with this passion in mind.

There is, however, a specific focus in this chapter on the theology of contextual evangelisation that was presented in *Liberating News*.² The first two sections of the chapter examine two background factors to Costas's missiology: his passion for evangelisation and the emergence of contextual theology in the second half of the 20th century. Then four significant themes of Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation are discussed: an expanded *la pastoral* that shaped his contextual theology, a commitment to stand with those who dwell on the periphery, the use of trinitarian *missio Dei* theology, and its evangelical character. All of these were brought together in his *Liberating News* by which Costas presented a Third World evangelical missiology.

Costas's General Understanding of Evangelisation

Evangelisation was the passion of Costas's ministry. Evangelisation is concerned with the varied ways that the Christian faith is proclaimed through time and space.³ It propels the Church 'to the ends of the earth and the depth of human life.' In *Liberating News*,

¹ Referred to by Rose Costas in the preface to: Orlando E. Costas, *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989), ix.

² For an earlier discussion of Costas's concept of contextual evangelisation, see: Priscilla Pope-Levison, 'Comprehensive and Contextual: The Evangelism of Orlando Costas,' *Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* 4 (1988-89): 4-14; idem, *Evangelization from a Liberation Perspective* (New York: P. Lang, 1991), 133-54.

³ Costas, *Liberating News*, 1.

Costas did not make a distinction between *evangelisation* and *mission*. Costas referred to mission as ‘primary evangelization,’ but did not expand beyond that.⁴

Costas expected that those who evangelised other people would be immersed in the harsh realities of human life and share the fears and hopes of those around them.⁵ Out of their own particular life situation, they would point to the God who delivers people from ‘the misery of the human condition.’ They would ‘share[] lovingly, even passionately, the gospel in word and deed.’⁶ These witnesses to the gospel would be mindful that they were dependent upon the Spirit who was at work in the lives of the people to whom they were communicating the gospel. Therefore, they would ‘hope in the power of God’s Spirit to enable those who hear the gospel and see it in action to understand its relevance for their lives, embrace it in faith, and follow in its path.’⁷

The primary intention of evangelisation, according to Costas, was ‘to transmit the good news of *shalom*, to declare publicly God’s salvation and to affirm God’s righteous and liberating reign.’⁸ The key elements of the gospel proclaimed by evangelisation were *shalom*, salvation, and God’s reign. Costas described *shalom* as justice and well-being.⁹ It was present in the history of Israel, but fully revealed in Jesus Christ. There is a sense that *shalom* is the primary characteristic of both God’s salvation and God’s reign, even though Costas did not state it directly.

Costas further described evangelisation, the ‘communication of the gospel,’ as the apostolic message of the cross.¹⁰ He cited the Apostle Paul’s assertion in 1 Corinthians 1:18 that the preaching of the cross of Jesus is the communication of the gospel. Evangelisation was primarily the communication through word and deed of the apostolic proclamation of Christ’s death on the cross. Apostolic preaching of the gospel presented ‘God’s liberating news through the cross of the risen Jesus.’ The cross, therefore, was crucial to understanding ‘the gospel as a message of liberation’ as well as understanding the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Costas emphasised that evangelisation was the means by which ‘we invite the peoples of the world to experience true life, hope, and love through faith in the risen Christ who was crucified for Israel and the world.’¹¹

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁸ Ibid., 46.

⁹ Ibid., 48.

¹⁰ Ibid., 88-9.

¹¹ Ibid., 111.

Costas went beyond simply the nature and practice of evangelisation by proposing a *theology* of evangelisation.¹² Such a theology would be ‘informed by a prophetic and apostolic biblical text and patterned after the evangelising mission of the prophets and apostles.’ As a theology, its function was ‘to reflect critically and constructively on the *evangelical* content and evangelistic context of the Christian faith.’ Its purpose was to point the Church to ‘a more faithful, holistic, and liberating engagement in and through [her] mission.’¹³ The content of the gospel would be clarified and its communication made more efficacious.

Contextual Theology

Costas arrived on the theological scene as the contextual nature of theology became increasingly recognised by theologians around the world. In *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch examined the origin, issues, and ambiguities of mission as contextualisation.¹⁴ As a reaction to the dominance of North Atlantic theological circles, contextual theology—as it has become more commonly referred to—was a new way of doing theology that played a major part in what Bosch described as an emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm.¹⁵

Bosch recognised that the incarnation principle, the foundation of contextual theology, had been evident throughout Church history. ‘[F]rom the very beginning,’ he wrote, ‘the missionary message of the Christian church incarnated itself in the life and world of those who embraced it.’¹⁶ The term ‘contextualisation’ only came into use early in the 1970s, thus revealing that until relatively recently theological circles had not recognised the contextual nature of faith and theology.¹⁷

In the early 19th century Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) challenged the prevailing view that ideas and principles specific to certain cultures were confirmed and legitimised as ‘both suprahistorical and supra-cultural.’¹⁸ But in contrast to this prevailing view, Bosch recognised that Schleiermacher ‘pioneered the view that all theology was influenced, if not determined, by the context in which it had evolved. There never was a “pure” message, supracultural and suprahistorical.’

¹² Ibid., 18.

¹³ Ibid. The italicised word is in Costas’s text.

¹⁴ Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 420-32.

¹⁵ Ibid., 420.

¹⁶ Ibid., 421.

¹⁷ Ibid., 420-21.

¹⁸ Ibid., 421-22.

Thus the view that all particular theologies are parochial and conditioned by their particular contexts was recognised as the received position in the various critical schools of theology around the world. Biblical interpretation had become a socio-economic and political exercise as well as a literary exercise. It is widely asserted that ‘*all* theology (or sociology, political theory, etc) is, by its very nature, contextual.’¹⁹ According to Bosch, this assertion was the critical ‘breakthrough’ for the emergence of the various Third World theologies.

Bosch identified significant differences between traditional Western theology and the emerging contextual theology.²⁰ The former conducted theology ‘*from above* as an elitist enterprise;’ used Scripture, tradition, and philosophy as its sources; and was primarily engaged with ‘the *educated non-believer*.’ In contrast, the latter emerged ‘from below’ and ‘from the underside of history;’ used Scripture, tradition, and the social sciences as its sources; and was primarily engaged with ‘the *poor* or the *culturally marginalized*.’

Bosch also recognised that contextual theology was based on a new paradigm of epistemology.²¹ This new epistemology expressed a ‘profound suspicion’ of Western science, philosophy, and theology because they were ‘actually designed to serve the interests of the West, more particularly to legitimize’ the world created and dominated by Western interests. It sought to change the world rather than merely understand it. Historical forces and the world of flesh and blood people, not ideas or static objects, were the domain of the new epistemology. The new epistemology called for a commitment to orthopraxis rather than to orthodoxy. Contextual theologians were committed to society’s marginalized, and thus committed to doing theology that was at the service of social transformation. Only as theology stood with those who suffered was it deemed credible. This new way of doing theology also featured the hermeneutical circulation (or circle) that wove theory, reason, and orthodoxy together with experience, action, and orthopraxis.

The contextualisation approach, stressed Bosch, was ‘an affirmation that God has turned toward the world.’²² God in Christ ‘did not soar off into heavenly heights but immersed himself into the altogether real circumstances of the poor, the captives, the blind, the oppressed (Luke 4:18f).’ The approach took seriously the engagement of the Church with the world, especially those who suffer and are marginalized. Bosch concluded: ‘Like its Lord, the church-in-mission must take sides, *for* life and against death, *for* jus-

¹⁹ Ibid., 423. The italicised word is in Bosch’s text.

²⁰ Ibid. The italicised words are in Bosch’s text.

²¹ Ibid., 424.

²² Ibid., 426.

tice and against oppression.’²³ Thus the Incarnation came to the fore in contextual theology.

Bosch referred to liberation theology (LT) as a manifestation of ‘mission as contextualisation.’ LT was ‘one of the most dramatic illustrations of the fundamental paradigm shift that is currently taking place in mission thinking and practice.’²⁴ Just as LT regarded the poor as its reference point for doing theology, so in both Protestant and Roman Catholic missiological literature the poor became the primary reference point for assessing the efficacy of the Church’s mission.²⁵ The ‘poor’ referred to all people who were victimised by society. They were ‘the first, though not the only ones, on which God’s attention focuses and that, therefore the church has no choice but to demonstrate solidarity with the poor.’²⁶

Costas’s passion for evangelisation and the prominence of contextual theology in the second half of the 20th century set the course of Costas’s theological itinerary. His theology of contextual evangelisation that was presented in *Liberating News* was shaped by four significant themes: *la pastoral*, the periphery, trinitarian *missio Dei* theology, and evangelicalism. As reflected in his writings, Costas developed these four significant themes while travelling on his missiological journey. He brought them all together in his *Liberating News* by which he presented a Third World evangelical missiology.

An Expanded *La Pastoral*

The first significant theme found in Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation is *la pastoral*.²⁷ I would suggest that in the 1980s, Costas stopped referring to *la pastoral* in his writings, but used its content in his formulation of a theology of contextual evangelisation in *Liberating News*. *La pastoral* was a theology of contextual evangelisation oriented to Latin America. In *Liberating News*, Costas presented a theology of contextual evangelisation that was an updated and expanded version of *la pastoral* that addressed the critical issues and concerns of the Two Thirds World / Third World. Costas had developed the essentials of *la pastoral* in the earlier part of his theological itinerary. During the latter stages of his missiological journey, Costas rolled over to his theology of contextual evangelisation the essential elements of *la pastoral*. They are similar in that both

²³ Ibid., 226. The italicised words are in Bosch’s text.

²⁴ Ibid., 432. Chapter four of this thesis focuses on Costas’s survey and appraisal of Latin American liberation theology.

²⁵ Ibid., 435.

²⁶ Ibid., 436.

²⁷ Discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

arise from Costas's passion for evangelisation and both are pastoral and contextual theologies of evangelisation. His theology of contextual evangelisation is an amplified version of *la pastoral*.

Costas grounded *la pastoral* in the Incarnation; the Incarnation was the foundation of *la pastoral*.²⁸ God did not exist merely in the realm of ideas; God was incarnated into concrete historical situations. The gospel was also incarnated into the specific concrete historical situations of people's lives. Just as the Incarnation was crucial to *la pastoral*, so it was with contextual evangelisation. Costas asserted that the Incarnation made evangelisation possible.²⁹ There would not have been evangelisation if there had not been the Incarnation. Because Jesus is the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, contextual evangelisation is grounded in Jesus, the eternal God in human flesh. Evangelisation is based on God speaking to the world through Jesus Christ. The gospel was 'embodied in Jesus as part and parcel of a particular social, cultural, and historical reality.' He was known as 'Jesus of Nazareth, the Galilean, who was crucified.'³⁰ Costas recognised that the 'the gospel was first proclaimed in the language and culture, in the space and time of a first century Galilean Jew.'

La pastoral meant the Church's mission would address the real needs of flesh and blood people in their own life situations. As a result, no area of human life would be beyond the scope of her mission, whether personal and intimate, or social, economic, and political. In *Liberating News*, the Incarnation of Jesus meant that God addresses every human in his or her own time and space.³¹ This is the way that God evangelises: 'This God communicates only in the vernacular and addresses persons and communities in the particularity of their socio-cultural and historical situations.' Costas summed up by stating that

the God of the Incarnation is the God who chose in sovereign freedom not only to be contextualized in the history and sociocultural reality of a first century Jew but also to become available, through the transmission of the gospel in the power of the Spirit, to every person and community in their concrete reality.³²

Therefore the gospel engages with the personal struggles, internal conflicts, questions, guilt, loneliness, emptiness, and addictions of real flesh and blood people in all situations in which they live. The Church was called to engage with the socio-economic

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Costas, *Liberating News*, 24.

³⁰ Ibid., 24-5.

³¹ Ibid., 25.

³² Ibid.

and political issues that people encountered in their daily lives. This was the course that both *la pastoral* and contextual evangelisation shared.

Evangelisation, Costas wrote, ‘implies bearing witness to the God who saves us from the misery of the human condition. It is intensely personal and extensively social witness that requires immersion in a particular sociohistorical context and participation in the struggles of humanity.’³³ Costas emphasised that contextual evangelisation targeted real people in their various social and historical situations with the gospel in both word and deed.³⁴ ‘The evangelistic task,’ he wrote, ‘is always carried out under the assumption that the God who has spoken in Jesus Christ addresses each and every human being in his or her time and space.’³⁵

La pastoral’s emphasis on concrete historical situations found its way into the theology of contextual evangelisation. Costas viewed evangelisation as ‘a witness that takes place in a given social and historical context. It is part of a living space with its own cultural, geographic, economic, social, and political characteristics, and it is carried out in a temporal moment, be it a generation or an epoch.’³⁶ Evangelisation, therefore, was always directed to ‘social and historically situated human beings.’ It is about ‘women and men sharing and receiving the gospel in a given moment and a particular space, in their most concrete and vulnerable reality.’³⁷

Those Who Dwell on the Periphery

The second significant theme of Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation refers to the people who dwell on the periphery of the world. In chapter one, this theme was identified as the key concept of Costas’s autobiographical writings. Ever since his third conversion to socio-political action, Costas had committed himself to joining Christ in solidarity with those who dwell on the periphery of the world.

As was seen above, Costas based his discussion of those who dwell on the periphery on the Incarnation. He emphasised that, in Jesus, ‘God became part of history, identifying with its most humble expression and suffering its deepest pain.’³⁸ Jesus, the Son of God, gave up his glory, became human, and came into the realm of suffering and death. His whole life was lived in the world of poverty. According to Costas’s reading of Luke

³³ Ibid., 20.

³⁴ Ibid., 21-2.

³⁵ Ibid., 24.

³⁶ Ibid., 22.

³⁷ Ibid., 23.

³⁸ Ibid., 27.

4:18-20, Jesus exercised a 'preferential option to the poor.' By God becoming poor in Christ, humanity was saved from sin and death, and God's identity was seen. Because the poor are 'a central reference to God's identity,' people 'see God's human face' in the faces of the poor.³⁹

Costas asserted that there were biblical texts that referred to the prophetic character of contextual evangelisation.⁴⁰ They pointed to the poor and afflicted as the first addressees of God's good news. He specifically cited Isaiah 61:1-3 and its attestation that the poor, the broken hearted, the captives, and the prisoners were the addressees of the good news of Yahweh's favour.⁴¹ Jesus cited this text as the starting point of his evangelistic ministry (Luke 4:18-19).

Another biblical pattern that was critically important to Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation was the Gospel of Mark's Galilean periphery model of contextual evangelisation.⁴² Costas identified Jesus as 'the evangelist of the periphery.'⁴³ Jesus evangelised those who lived on the margins of institutional Israel and those who dwelt outside the covenant community. To many people throughout history, Jesus has been seen as 'an obscure, "foolish" Galilean.' But the Gospel of Mark presented another view. Costas summarised Mark's portrayal of Jesus in this way: Jesus was 'the Son of God who became a "nobody" in order to make women and men "somebody" and bring into being a new creation.'⁴⁴

Costas described Jesus as the evangelist who went to those who lived in the periphery of Galilee.⁴⁵ Jesus was 'a poor person who identified with the oppressed and died as one of them to liberate humanity from the power of sin and death and make possible a new order of life—of love, justice, freedom, and peace.' From his understanding of such texts as Matthew 11:25, Costas contended that the poor 'are the ones who are most able to understand the meaning of the gospel.' Galilee, therefore, is a symbol of the periphery as the primary context for evangelisation everywhere and in every time. The 'Galilees' of the world are the reference points and starting points of evangelisation.⁴⁶

³⁹ Ibid., 28. Costas referred to: Victorio Araya, *El Dios de los Pobres* (San José, Costa Rica: DEI Sebila, 1984).

⁴⁰ Costas, *Liberating News*, chapter three, 33-48.

⁴¹ Ibid., 45-6.

⁴² Ibid., chapter four, 49-70.

⁴³ Ibid., 50. Costas was drawing from the study of: Juan Mateos, *Los Doce y Otros Seguidores de Jesús en el Evangelio de Marcos* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1982), 247-52.

⁴⁴ Costas, *Liberating News*, 53.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 61.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 62.

The people of the periphery have borne the brunt of injustice, powerlessness, marginalization, oppression, and poverty.⁴⁷ They are the multitudes that Jesus evangelised. They are those who dwell ‘outside the gate’ and at ‘the crossroads’ of life where evangelisation is to be carried out.⁴⁸ ‘The poor, the powerless, and the oppressed’ are the ‘the privileged addressees of the gospel—those whom Jesus called blessed and to whom he gave the promise of the kingdom (Luke 6:20).’⁴⁹ They are so ‘because in their destitution they are a living witness to the magnitude of God’s suffering love’ and ‘because they have no one else but God and are, therefore, more willing to put their faith in him alone.’

The crucified Christ beckons the Church to join him ‘outside the camp’ and to stand with him in solidarity with the poor, wretched, powerless, the outcast, and the oppressed. That is where contextual evangelisation takes place.⁵⁰ Costas challenged the Church to ‘establish[] a preferential option for the marginalized of society’ and to return to where ‘the absentees of history, the most vulnerable and needy people of society’ dwell.⁵¹

Trinitarian *Missio Dei*

The third significant theme of Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation is trinitarian *Missio Dei*. Throughout the course of the corpus of his writings, Costas used trinitarian terms in order to express the developing shape of his missiology. In his writings on *la pastoral*, he combined the formulations of the Triune nature of God with biblical imagery of God as shepherd.⁵² God the Father sent God the Son into the world on a shepherding mission. The Son is the Good Shepherd who gives his life for the lost sheep. The Father and the Son send God the Spirit into the world to continue the Son’s pastoral ministry. Then the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—send out the Church, God’s community of faith, to continue the pastoral ministry of the Triune God in the world. Costas placed *la pastoral*—the pastoral aspect of the Church’s mission—in the larger theological context of the pastoral mission of the Triune God.

In an 1979 article on evangelism in Latin America, Costas argued that the Triune missionary God sent the Church to engage with the world.⁵³ The Church was called by the Triune God to interact with the concrete historical context of Latin America because

⁴⁷ Ibid., 64.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 81.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 149.

⁵² Discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

⁵³ Orlando E. Costas, "Evangelism in a Latin American Context," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 3:1 (1979): 52-67, at 62.

the Son and the Spirit had entered into that reality. Therefore the Church was called to immerse herself into the issues confronting Latin Americans; to stand in solidarity with those committed to various causes and struggles; and to be sensitive to the frustrations, protests, hopes, and aspirations of the people.⁵⁴ At this time, Costas grounded his trinitarian *missio Dei* missiology in the historical reality of Latin America and solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. As the Father sent Jesus, the incarnate Son, into the world to identify with the poor and oppressed, so the Triune God sends the Church into the world to do the same. The Church's mission, therefore, is authentic only to the extent she identifies with the poor and the oppressed.

In *Transforming Mission*, Bosch recognised that mission as *missio Dei* was a significant development in missiology. Consequently, he devoted a section to it as an element of an 'emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm.'⁵⁵ His key point was that '[m]ission is, primarily and ultimately, the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church is privileged to participate.'⁵⁶ Up until the last half of the 20th century, mission had been understood as the Church's mission. But in response to this, in an earlier book, Bosch had argued that '[m]ission has its origin neither in the official Church nor in special groups within the Church. It has its origin in God. God is a missionary God, a God who crosses frontiers towards the world.'⁵⁷

Bosch also noted that virtually all the Christian traditions had endorsed this understanding of mission as *missio Dei*. He cited Costas's *Liberating News* as the single example of 'many evangelicals' who had affirmed mission as *missio Dei*.⁵⁸ Later Bevans and Schroeder noted that there was a 'genuine renewal in trinitarian theology' in all the Christian traditions and that 'it is possible to say that the understanding of mission as rooted in the trinitarian mission of God in the world is once again at the forefront of mis-

⁵⁴ Ibid., 62-3.

⁵⁵ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 389-93.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 392.

⁵⁷ David J. Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Mission in Theological Perspective* (London / Atlanta, GA: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott / John Knox Press, 1980), 239. For a brief overview of the term, see: John A. McIntosh, "Missio Dei," in *EDWM*, ed. Moreau (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000). For other examples of the Trinitarian missiology in Protestant thought, see: Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1978), 20-72; idem., *Trinitarian Faith and Today's Mission* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1963); H. Rosin, 'Missio Dei: An Examination of the Origin, Contents and Function of the Term in Protestant Missiological Discussion' (Leiden: Interuniversity Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, 1972); George F. Vicedom, *The Mission of God: An Introduction to a Theology of Mission* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1965).

⁵⁸ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 391.

siological thinking.’⁵⁹ Costas’s *Liberating News* was an expression of this renewal in trinitarian missiology in evangelical circles.⁶⁰

In the fifth of eight chapters in *Liberating News*, Costas presented a well-developed expression of trinitarian *missio Dei* missiology.⁶¹ Although Bosch cited him as an example of a proponent of trinitarian *missio Dei*, Costas had never used the term anywhere in his writings. Yet the clear sense of it is communicated in the title of chapter five: ‘The God of the Evangel: The Trinitarian Community as an Evangelizing Presence.’ Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation was anchored in the Triune missionary God.

Throughout Costas’s missiological writings and the bulk of *Liberating News*, Costas referred to God in trinitarian terms. But in the fifth chapter of his last book, Costas intensified his use of the concept of the Triune nature of the missionary God. The Triune God was the source, content, and goal of mission and evangelisation.⁶² The origin of the gospel is God; its content is the Son, Jesus the messiah; and it is communicated through the power of the Holy Spirit. Trinitarian *missio Dei* served as the theological foundation of Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation.

Costas identified two movements of the Triune missionary God in relation to the gospel. The first movement expresses the essence of the gospel: the holy and loving Father sends the loving and obedient Son into the world in order to save it by dying on the cross.⁶³ In love, the Father delivers the Beloved Son to death on the cross so that communion is restored between God and humanity. The second movement presents the Spirit bringing the world to God through the Son for the Father’s glory.⁶⁴ The Spirit empowers Jesus in every aspect of his mission: his life, his atoning death on the cross, and his resurrection. The Spirit unites the crucified and resurrected Son with the Father, binds the Church’s mission to the Son’s mission, and unites the world with the Father. The gospel

⁵⁹ Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 291.

⁶⁰ For other examples of the renewal in Trinitarian missiology among evangelicals, see: Samuel Escobar, *A Time for Mission: The Challenge for Global Christianity* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 83-127; Ajith Fernando, "Part 3: Grounding Our Reflection in Scripture: Biblical Trinitarianism and Mission," in *Global Missiology for the 21st Century: The Iguassu Dialogue* ed., William David Taylor (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 189-256; Alan Roxburgh, "Rethinking Trinitarian Missiology," in idem, 179-88; J. Andrew Kirk, *What Is Mission? Theological Explorations* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1999), 25-30; John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 325-36.

⁶¹ Costas, *Liberating News*, 71-87. Costas had presented the same chapter in Spanish three years earlier in: Orlando E. Costas, *Evangelización Contextual: Fundamentos teológicos y pastorales* (San José, Costa Rica: Ediciones SEBILA, 1986), 73-89.

⁶² Costas, *Liberating News*, 72.

⁶³ Ibid., 73-5.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 75-6.

is the story of all that the ‘communal, missionary, and uniting God’ does to restore the ‘godless world’ to communion with the Triune God.⁶⁵ Costas identified two movements of the Triune missionary God in relation to the gospel: the holy and loving Father sending the loving and obedient Son into the world and the Spirit taking the world to God by means of the Son for the glory of the Father.⁶⁶ Therefore the Triune community that sent itself out in mission into history has also received into itself the redeemed human community that is the accomplishment of that trinitarian history.

Costas viewed the first movement of trinitarian *missio Dei* as the gospel story. The second movement provides the theological framework by which contextual evangelisation communicates the gospel story. The starting point for contextual evangelisation is ‘the reconciling action of the Holy Spirit through the cross of the Son.’⁶⁷ Evangelisation is part of the Spirit’s portfolio and is carried out by the Spirit’s ‘power’ and ‘creative energy.’ Evangelisation only takes place as a result of the Spirit’s dynamic power and presence.⁶⁸

Within the trinitarian *missio Dei* framework, Costas viewed the cross of Christ as the ‘mediating sign’ of evangelisation.⁶⁹ He used ‘sign’ in this context to refer to ‘a material object that points beyond itself to a spiritual and eschatological reality.’ The cross of Christ is essential to evangelisation because the cross ‘is the place where God’s work for the reconciliation of the world took place.’ The cross upon which Jesus died points to the spiritual and eschatological reality of the world set free through the crucified Son. It is the foundation of evangelisation and set the content of its proclamation.⁷⁰

The place of the kingdom of God in contextual evangelisation was also put into perspective by trinitarian *missio Dei*. Costas asserted that ‘the all-encompassing goal of evangelization is to make known God’s kingdom as embodied in Jesus Christ and made present by the Holy Spirit.’⁷¹ Church growth is important, but the Church is ‘only a sign and instrument of the kingdom.’ The kingdom of God, not the Church, is the goal of contextual evangelisation.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 77.

⁶⁶ Costas expressed his indebtedness to Jürgen Moltmann for his presentation of Trinitarian history. See: Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 50ff; idem, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), *passim*.

⁶⁷ Costas, *Liberating News*, 77.

⁶⁸ Costas expounded the role of the Spirit in contextual evangelisation in: *ibid.*, 77-80.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 80.

⁷⁰ Ibid. For more on the cross as the mediating sign of evangelisation, see: *ibid.*, 80-3. Costas’s view of the death of the Son on the cross is discussed in chapter nine of this thesis.

⁷¹ Ibid., 82-83.

Costas grounded contextual evangelisation that was based on trinitarian *missio Dei* in the world of the suffering and dying. It ‘involves the immersion of the evangelizing community into both the depth of human history and the history of the Triune God.’⁷² As a result of the long history of human suffering and death being taken up into God’s suffering on the cross, human history has been taken up into the inner life of the Triune God.⁷³ That long painful human history, Costas argued, must be incorporated into the gospel whenever it is proclaimed. Contextual evangelisation, therefore, goes first to those ‘who lie at the bottom, those who are the representatives par excellence of the tragic human history of selfishness, injustice, greed, alienation, and despair.’ The theological concept of trinitarian *missio Dei* gave shape and substance to his unique understanding of evangelisation.

The Evangelical Marks of Conversionism and Activism

The fourth and final significant theme of Costas’s *Liberating News* is actually a pair, the evangelical characteristics of conversionism and activism. These two characteristics are two of the four ‘defining attributes of the Evangelical religion’ that were identified by the historian D. W. Bebbington.⁷⁴ He used the pair of traits and another pair, biblicism and crucicentrism, to define evangelicalism in Britain from the early 18th century to the late 20th century.⁷⁵ They have, however, become recognised all over the world as the four distinguishing marks of evangelical identity. The evangelical marks of biblicism and crucicentrism are examined in the next chapter, and conversionism and activism are examined in this chapter.⁷⁶ Conversion refers to a person choosing to repent of their sins and embracing Jesus after hearing and believing the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁷⁷ Activism flows from conversion and is expressed as a desire to evangelise others and to seek the social welfare of others.⁷⁸

Costas devoted the seventh chapter of *Liberating News* to the topic because it had a significant place in his missiology.⁷⁹ The title of the chapter is ‘The Call to Conversion’ and the subtitle ‘New Life in the Spirit.’ The cross of Jesus Christ is the heart of the

⁷² Ibid., 84-5.

⁷³ Ibid., 85.

⁷⁴ D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London : Routledge, 1999): 4.

⁷⁵ For a summary and explanation of the four characteristics of British evangelicalism, see: Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 2-17.

⁷⁶ For an overview of conversionism, see: *ibid.*, 5-10; and for activism, see: *ibid.*, 10-2.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 10, 12.

⁷⁹ Costas, *Liberating News*, 112-30.

gospel. Inherent in the gospel is ‘an invitation to experience new life in the Holy Spirit through repentance and faith in Christ.’⁸⁰ By means of conversion, the Holy Spirit awakens a person from death to new life and sets that person on a transformative path. Conversion means that a person turns away from sin and self and turns to God and what God has done.⁸¹ It includes ‘the abandonment of an old worldview and the adoption of a new one.’ Conversion also ‘entails a new allegiance, a new trust, and a new life commitment.’ It is only the beginning of a new journey that leads to other conversions in the process of the transformation of a person’s life.

The redemptive love of the Triune God is present and at work in every aspect of conversion.⁸² Costas emphasised the transformative aspect of God’s work in conversion.⁸³ As a result, it was ‘both a distinct moment and the first in a series of transforming experiences.’ The Holy Spirit empowers ‘a continuous transforming movement’ in a person’s life after the ‘distinct moment’ of the initial conversion. There is not just one conversion, but ‘a constant turning from the self to God.’ Over the course of a person’s life, the Spirit ushers the converted person ‘from a dehumanising existence to a humanized and humanizing life,’ and ‘from death and decay to life and freedom.’⁸⁴

Bebbington observed that generations of evangelicals have linked activism with conversion.⁸⁵ So it was with Costas. He expected that a robust, energetic active faith would flow from the reality of conversion in a person’s life. Authentic believers do not seek escape from the world, but are empowered ‘to participate in [history’s] transformation through their witness and service.’⁸⁶ Costas stressed that active discipleship was expressed through loving service to God and neighbour in concrete historical situations of life.⁸⁷ According to Costas, evangelisation must not be limited to proclamation; it must bear fruit in social action in concrete historical situations.

Faith played an active part in Costas’s view of evangelical conversion and activism. Simply put, faith is obedience to God’s will.⁸⁸ It begins with trust in Jesus and what he did on the cross.⁸⁹ By faith in Jesus, a person goes from death to life and is made a new creation. The person experiences a transformation of his or her own life, ‘having exper-

⁸⁰ Ibid., 112.

⁸¹ Ibid., 113.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 114.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 114-15.

⁸⁵ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 10.

⁸⁶ Costas, *Liberating News*, 115.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 117.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 17.

ience God's grace, forgiveness, restitution, and liberation for service.' But expanding his view, he asserted that 'the gift of faith [] is the grace God gives us to move beyond reliance on ourselves and to trust in him and commit our lives to his care and service.' Authentic faith is expressed through discipleship, understanding, praxis, trust, obedience to God's Word, and service to others.

According to Costas, there were three key aspects to discipleship: commitment to Jesus and his ways; obedience to Christ's Word; and participation in his mission.⁹⁰ Jesus demands unconditional trust in him and the rejection of all other lords. It means hearing Christ's Word and following him. Discipleship, Costas wrote, involves a pilgrimage through the wilderness of life, even going "outside the camp" (Heb. 13:13) where Christ died.⁹¹ Discipleship 'implies personal identification with Christ's suffering and solidarity with the suffering of women and men everywhere; it implies death to personal ambition and a disposition to bear others' burdens for Christ's sake.' Therefore Costas viewed discipleship involved purposefully and sacrificially living in solidarity with the women and men who dwell in the world of suffering and death.

Costas asserted that in the Two Thirds World, discipleship was being lived out through sacrifice and solidarity with people who lived 'in situations of poverty, powerlessness, and oppression.'⁹² On the periphery, discipleship was 'being tested on the altar of life;' it had 'suddenly become a Golgotha.' As Christians live out their faith in situations of oppression, injustice, and persecution, they are forced to make a decision between commitment to God's Word or denial of the faith, and sometimes between persecution and death for the cause of justice or mere survival through resignation and accommodation to the *status quo*.

Costas stressed that through conversion, believers are set free to serve others. Activism flows out of conversion. Both find their source in the gospel. Activism is not merely action for the sake of action; it is action for the sake of the gospel and the kingdom of God. Faith is not only hearing the Word, but also doing the Word (James 1:22).⁹³ Throughout the length of *Liberating News*, Costas stated that doing the Word was expressed through obedience, service, discipleship, and Christian praxis. A key word in the

⁹⁰ Ibid., 125-26.

⁹¹ Ibid., 126. The Hebrews 13 citation be referring back to Costas's printed sermon in the epilogue of his *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982): 188-94. There is discussion of the theme of Christ outside the gate in chapter nine of this thesis.

⁹² Costas, *Liberating News*, 126.

⁹³ Ibid., 17.

book is ‘transformation.’ The gospel calls people ‘to participate in the transformation of a world of fears and tears into a new order of peace and justice, laughter and joy.’⁹⁴

Costas’s distinct expression of conversion and activism is summed up in the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song. The elements of faith that were dear to Costas are expressed through the song. God calls women and men to serve others by labouring to construct a new society of justice and peace. The world will be transformed from a world of pain and hurt into a world of love. The song ends with a prayer of sorts that this vision would be so, and that God would grant grace to the disciples so that they would obey and do God’s will.⁹⁵

Sent by the Lord am I.
My hands are ready now
to help construct a just and peaceful loving world.
The angels cannot change a world of pain and hurt
into a world of love, of justice and of peace.
The task is mine to do.
Make it reality—
O help me, God, obey, help me to do your will.

Costas’s unique theology of contextual evangelisation reached its most mature expression in *Liberating News*. The theology was conceived by Costas’s own passion for evangelisation and nurtured by a theological environment that welcomed the emergence of contextual theology onto the world theological scene. Themes that Costas developed in his earlier missiological writings found expression in *Liberating News*. He mixed both *la pastoral* and trinitarian *missio Dei* into the theology of contextual evangelisation. He recognised the contextual nature of evangelisation and gave priority of the gospel to those who dwell on the periphery. Trinitarian *missio Dei* provided shape and substance to Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation. His theology of contextual evangelisation expresses the marks of evangelicalism affirmed by evangelicals around the world.

Critical Comments

Costas’s theology of contextual evangelisation in *Liberating News* was formulated at the end of his theological itinerary. His contextual theology was the fruit of a long theological journey. Costas was confronted by 500 years of oppression, injustice, and exploitation of the Latin American people and, as an evangelical, he wrestled with how to evangelise the people who existed on the peripheries of the world. A socio-political conver-

⁹⁴ Ibid., 31.

⁹⁵ Costas inserted the words of the gospel song in his text at: *ibid.*, 130. The song in Spanish with the English version done by Orlando and Rose Costas is found on page ii of this thesis.

sion, the second of four significant conversions in his life, created such a conflict in his life that he undertook critical theological reflection on the Protestant Church's mission in the Latin American revolutionary situation. There are strong echoes of theology of the crossroads and Christ outside the gate evident in *Liberating News*. The perspectives gleaned from critical reflection on *la pastoral*—especially to the poor, suffering, and marginalized of the world—significantly shaped Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation. He heard the cries for justice from the people of the Third World / Two Thirds World and joined Christ who stood with the poor and the oppressed in order to construct a new world of justice and peace.

Themes that had been introduced and developed in Costas's previous writings played significant roles in his theology of contextual evangelisation that he presented in *Liberating News*. The themes of the pastoral shape of contextual evangelisation, the priority of people on the periphery of life as the first addressees of the gospel, the missionary nature of the Triune God, and the evangelical marks of conversionism and activism, all came into prominence in Costas's missiology. It is the fruit of Costas's theological itinerary.

Just as the significant theme of the people who dwell on the periphery was the key organising theme of Costas's autobiographical writings, so it is with his *Liberating News*. The missiological content of the book revolves around this key theme. The other three significant themes relate to the key organising theme of the periphery of life. Costas used all four significant themes together to give shape and substance to his theology of contextual evangelisation. Each theme interacted with the theme of those who dwell on the periphery of life. The theme of the periphery was the connecting theme of the other themes with one another and fitted together in Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation.

La pastoral served as the foundation of Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation. Costas's contextual theology followed *la pastoral*'s lead of presenting the gospel to every area of human life, from the intimate and personal, to the socio-economic and political. Trinitarian *missio Dei* theology served as the theological foundation for Costas's theology. Costas's handling of the evangelical marks of conversionism and activism presented his theology as an evangelical missiology. Because each of these three significant themes were related to the theme of the people who live on the periphery of the world for the purpose of the Church's evangelisation, Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation can truly be seen as a Two Thirds World / Third World evangelical missiology.

Liberating News reflects Costas's reading of the Bible and the formulation of his missiology from the perspective of the periphery. Whatever Scripture text he examined, or whatever he wrote about, Costas did so from the perspective of the periphery. In *Liberating News* he read Esther, Second and Third Isaiah, and Mark from the perspective of the periphery. Everywhere he looked, he saw the periphery. I would suggest that he was so committed to the periphery that he limited what he reflected on theologically. Everything he considered in his theology was considered solely from the perspective of the periphery. Everything he reflected on in *Liberating News* had to make contact with the key theme.

The theme of the people who dwell on the periphery of life set the direction of *Liberating News* and gave it shape. The people on the periphery were the poor, powerless, and marginalized, and thus Costas argued that they were the most able to witness to and share in God's redemptive suffering on behalf of the world. He also asserted that the people of the periphery were the most willing to trust in God alone because they had nothing and no one in whom they could put their trust. The words of the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song sing out that those who stand in solidarity with the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed are ready to join in the struggle to construct a world of justice, peace, and love.

But the narrative in Psalm 106 of Israel in the wilderness gives a different perspective on the people of the periphery. In Egypt, the oppressed, suffering, and enslaved people of Israel cried out to God for justice. Yahweh heard their cry and liberated them from their Egyptian oppressors. God led redeemed Israel out into the wilderness on their way to a land where Yahweh would be her God, she would be God's people, and Yahweh would dwell in the midst of her. But according to Psalm 106, Israel constantly worshipped other gods, sought to construct her own kingdom, and took every opportunity to go her own way. Even though she had witnessed first hand Yahweh's mighty liberating deeds, Israel was opposed to God just as much as her Egyptian slave masters were. The divine judgments against her were just as severe as those against Egypt. Because Yahweh had made covenant with Israel, she should have known better. Her relationship with God was characterised by her constant complaining, rebellion, unfaithfulness, disobedience, and seeking to go her own way. This picture of Israel in the wilderness stands in stark contrast to the picture Costas presents of the people who dwell outside the gate on the periphery of the world.

From the perspective of Psalm 106, Israel was an utter failure in terms of doing justice and constructing a new world. Israel exhibited a radical inability to do justice and

pursue peace. The pattern of Israel in the wilderness is repeated throughout Scripture and history. The narrative bears witness to the oppressed becoming the oppressor, the abused the abuser, the poor greedy, and the powerless exploitive. The scriptures give ample testimony that God hears the cry of the poor and the oppressed for justice and takes their side against the rich and powerful. But they do not give support to Costas's contention that those who dwell on the periphery of the world are the vanguard of a new society of peace and justice, the kingdom of God. These two narratives stand in opposition to one another. I would suggest that his narrative of the liberated poor and oppressed constructing a new society of peace, justice, and love has no basis in Scripture or history. There is no basis for Costas's view when examined from the perspective of Israel in the wilderness as portrayed in Psalm 106.

The narrative of the people of the periphery is the controlling narrative in Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation as presented in *Liberating News*, at least in the first four chapters of the book. In the fifth of the eight chapters in *Liberating News*, Costas brought the narrative of trinitarian *missio Dei* into his theology of contextual evangelisation. He was able to break out of the confining bounds of the narrative of Christ standing in solidarity with the poor, marginalized, and suffering and interact with the grand narrative of the Triune missionary God at work in history. He was not locked into a single focused 19th century ideological stance, but was caught up into the reality beyond space, time and history. Yet Costas would not allow his missiology to reside in an ideal and abstract world. He grounded the narrative of trinitarian *missio Dei* in concrete historical contexts, radical commitment to those who dwell on the periphery, and the incarnational depth of *la pastoral*. The periphery was still significant, but it was viewed from the perspective of narrative of the Triune missionary God.

When he introduced the trinitarian *missio Dei* narrative in *Liberating News*, Costas moved beyond a singular focus on the periphery and its foundation in the doctrine of the Incarnation, and interacted with the other essential doctrines of the Christian faith as set forth in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. He did not confine himself to the evangelical tenets, but engaged with creedal Christianity. The meta-narrative of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation gave perspective to Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation. The trinitarian *missio Dei* narrative led him to interact with such theological issues as the sinfulness of humanity, the atoning death of Jesus on the cross, and salvation by grace through faith; and yet he grounded the grand narrative in engagement with the socio-economic and political issues of concrete historical contexts of people. Costas also

dealt with the suffering of humanity from this narrative of the Triune God. There was a sense of a new alignment that put all the doctrines of the Christian faith in their proper places and in relationship with one another.

Even though Costas embedded himself in the evangelical tradition in *Liberating News*, he presented a fresh new expression of evangelicalism that is oriented to evangelical engagement with the people and issues of the Two Thirds World / Third World. The focus in this chapter is on conversionism and activism, two of the four evangelical characteristics identified by Bebbington. Like Bebbington, Costas recognised conversion as a mark of evangelicalism. The former recognised that activism came forth from conversion, whereas the latter specifically referred to morality and personal piety arising from conversion. But in *Liberating News*, Costas described conversion producing a vibrant activism that was expressed through contextual evangelisation; he did not confine the fruit of conversion to morality and piety, he went far beyond it.

Bebbington pointed out that the evangelical mark of activism produced evangelism and engagement with social issues. As was seen in the previous chapter, the relationship between evangelism and social action was a priority issue among many evangelicals in the 1970s and 1980s. So it was with Costas. Just as his evangelical companions had been doing at congresses and consultations, he challenged evangelistic prioritisation and sought to bridge the separation between the proclamation of the gospel and social responsibility. According to Costas, as a result of conversion, the Christian believer was called to serve Jesus and the kingdom by means of evangelism and social action, or in other words, gospel words and liberating deeds. But he amplified further in *Liberating News*. Discipleship, transformation, service, and even suffering and martyrdom flowed from authentic conversion. The believer no longer lived for one's self, but for serving others and Christ and his kingdom.

Chapter conclusions

In 1989, the Manila Manifesto was approved at Lausanne II, and Costas's *Liberating News* was published posthumously. The Manila Manifesto was the culmination of a fifteen-year process that began with Lausanne '74. The process incorporated the work of consultations, conferences, statements, and declarations that slowly achieved a consensus at Lausanne II. *Liberating News* was written at the end of Costas's theological itinerary and reflects the distinctive elements of his missiological journey. During his itinerary, Costas engaged with the challenges of the Church's mission in the crossroads of life, in

the revolutionary situation of Latin America, in the socio-economic and political issues of life, with Christ outside the gate, and with those who dwell on the periphery of the world. Evangelisation, according to *Liberating News*, focused on the people who lived on the periphery of life.

Liberating News exhibits the evangelical passion for evangelisation and the four marks of the evangelical tradition that Costas shared with other evangelicals around the world. He joined with fellow evangelicals who sought to erase the prioritisation of evangelism over social action. Costas's own theology of evangelisation was developed within the global environment of contextual theology and its commitment to stand in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. But there were significant themes in Costas's last publication that he used in his own distinct way: *la pastoral*, trinitarian *missio Dei*, and his focus on those who dwell on the periphery of life. He formulated an evangelical missiology that was coupled to a commitment to stand with Christ in solidarity with those who dwell on the periphery of the world—the poor, the powerless, and those who suffer. The result of Costas's presentation of a theology of contextual evangelisation in *Liberating News* is a Two Thirds World / Third World evangelical missiology.

The primary and controlling narrative in Costas's missiology is the Church joining with Christ in solidarity with those on the periphery. The narrative of Israel in the wilderness that is presented in Psalm 106 stands in contrast with Costas's narrative of the periphery. This contrast brings up the issue of the other marks of evangelicalism—biblicism and crucicentrism. It is to those two marks—especially the latter-- that are considered in the next and final chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER NINE

Atonement Subdued

The purpose of this final chapter is to examine Costas's writings that seek to understand Christ's salvific work on the cross. The chapter begins by identifying some of the basics of atonement found in John Driver's study from a radical evangelical view. This is followed by a study of P.T. Forsyth's view on the atonement, especially his concept of Holy Love. Then there are sections on J.I. Packer's classic treatise on penal substitutionary atonement and John Stott's *The Cross of Christ*. The section that follows examines two of Costas's writings on the cross of Christ.

John Driver's Radical Evangelical Approach to the Atonement

In his *Understanding the Atonement for the Mission of the Church*,¹ John Driver examined Christ's work on the cross from a Radical Evangelical point of view and then reflected on the implications of Christ's salvific work for the Church's mission. Costas appreciated Driver's critical assessment of various atonement theories and his reflection on the implications for mission.² Although Costas did not cite Driver to support his arguments, the two shared a commitment to Radical Evangelicalism: justice for the poor, radical discipleship, faithfulness to the gospel of the kingdom in suffering and weakness, and a negative critique of Constantinian Christianity. Driver sets the stage for this chapter's study of Costas's view of the atonement.

Driver presented a radical evangelical view of the atonement as a life-giving treatment for what he diagnosed as the deadly disease of Constantinian Christianity.³ The problem, according to Driver, was that the saving work of Christ has been warped into 'an abstract "saving" transaction which allows sinful and violent people (especially the powerful) and corrupted structures to remain substantially unchanged.' Christ's life, death, and resurrection thus have no transforming impact on a person's life.

¹ John Driver, *Understanding the Atonement for the Mission of the Church* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986).

² Orlando E. Costas, *Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989), 178, note 30.

³ Driver, *Understanding Atonement*, 31.

Driver identified ten New Testament images of Christ's saving work on the cross.⁴ Images 'are pictures of a reality which is bigger than themselves.' Therefore they cannot stand alone, but must be seen in conjunction with other images, thus providing a picture of a greater reality. The metaphorical language of an image 'generally carries the ability to communicate more powerfully (and more imaginatively) than purely prosaic language.'⁵ Thus images are able to communicate the mystery of God's acts of salvation by Christ's life, death, and resurrection in ways nothing else is able to do.

Driver recognised that these ten motifs conjointly communicate the salvific meaning of the life, death, and resurrection of God's Son Jesus. The ten are: the Conflict-Victory-Liberation Motif, Vicarious Suffering, and Archetypal Images; the Martyr Motif, the Sacrifice Motif, the Expiation motif and the Wrath of God, and the Redemption-Purchase Motif; and Reconciliation, Justification, and the Adoption-Family Image.⁶ The images enable God's people to understand that they are 'liberated, forgiven, redeemed, reconciled, justified, and adopted into the family of God.'⁷ They encourage believers to recall that their identity is firmly based on Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Driver also reviewed and critiqued three principal theories of the atonement.⁸ These theories are 'human post-biblical constructions which try to explain in rationally satisfactory ways things which are not explained in a fully logical way in the biblical material itself.'⁹ The three, prominent in Western Christianity, are: the Classic Dramatic View, the Subjective View, and the Objective View.

The Classic Dramatic View, the oldest of the three theories, portrays Christ's work as a victory in a cosmic conflict.¹⁰ The theory was prominent in the second through the sixth centuries, and fell out of favour until Gustav Aulén resurrected it in the 20th century. On the cross Christ engaged in mortal combat with evil powers. As *Christus Victor* he won a decisive victory over powerful tyrants, thereby liberating humankind from bondage and suffering, and reconciling humanity with God. Christ is still engaged in intense spiritual warfare against evil powers.

⁴ Ibid., 35-6.

⁵ Ibid., 18.

⁶ Ibid., 19-29, is a brief résumé of the ten principal New Testament images. In chapters three to twelve, Driver devotes one chapter to each of the images.

⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁸ Ibid., 37-67.

⁹ Ibid., 37.

¹⁰ Ibid., 39-44.

In his book *Cur Deus Homos?* Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) developed the Objective View—also known as the Satisfaction theory of the atonement¹¹ It is the most influential theory for understanding Christ's salvific work in Western Christianity and has become almost an essential doctrine for conservative Protestants and 20th century Evangelicals. Sin constructs a 'barrier' between God and sinners.¹² This barrier is located outside the sinner. Christ's death on the cross breaks down the barrier, and thus re-establishes relations between God and humanity. Because this view perceives Christ's work tearing down the barrier outside the sinner and not within, it is labelled an objective view. Furthermore, because Christ's death is seen as providing satisfaction to God who has been wronged, the view is referred to as satisfactionist.¹³ Only Christ the God Man can make the required satisfaction that pays back the debt of honour that every sinner owes to God, but that no sinner can ever make. Christ's death on the cross is the satisfaction of God's justice so that God can forgive sinners of their full debt.

Peter Abelard (1079-1142) formulated the Subjective View, also referred to as the Moral Influence theory of the atonement.¹⁴ The loving God has such a transforming effect on people that they turn from being against God to standing with God. Driver wrote: 'Through the power of Jesus' example, people are moved to love God, whose forgiveness is based on limitless love and is given in response to the intercession of the risen Christ.'¹⁵ As a result of subjective changes in a person, issues of love, reconciliation, moral disposition, and ethics take on great significance. Even though God's love for humanity never changes, humans must be changed in order to be willing to receive God's love.¹⁶

Driver critiqued each of the three views, but argued that they must be held together as complementary.¹⁷ The Objective View recognises that because God must punish sin, Christ's cross provides a legal substitutionary satisfaction for sin. The Subjective View affirms that the supreme example of God's love toward humanity is Christ's life and death. When anyone focuses on this God's love in Christ, that person is transformed spiritually and morally. The ancient classical view perceives that by Christ's death and resurrection God has won the victory over evil powers. No one view by itself was able to cap-

¹¹ Ibid., 50-64.

¹² Ibid., 50-1.

¹³ Ibid., 51.

¹⁴ Ibid., 44-9.

¹⁵ Ibid., 44.

¹⁶ Ibid., 46.

¹⁷ Ibid., 67.

ture the ‘rich variety of meaning’ of Christ’s salvific work.¹⁸ These three together give a comprehensive view of the life and work of Christ. They reflect ‘the rich variety of meaning found in the New Testament’ about the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Driver also contended that the plurality of the ten New Testament images must be acknowledged in order to understand the atonement.¹⁹ The plurality of images that convey the multiple meanings of the work of Christ is due to ‘the diversity of contexts in which the apostolic mission was carried out by the primitive community.’²⁰ The gospel that was proclaimed by the early church was centred on the life, death, and resurrection of the Messiah. Each of the ten images engaged with a particular missionary context. But Driver emphasised that ‘The gospel message holds *all* of the New Testament motifs together.’²¹ A plurality of images is necessary for a fuller understanding of the salvific work of Christ and for evangelising in many different contexts.

Working with abundant biblical evidence, Driver affirmed the reality of divine wrath.²² The New Testament reflects an understanding of God’s wrath with Christ’s salvific work. ‘The biblical understanding of God’s wrath,’ Driver writes, ‘is deeply rooted in the loving covenant relationship which God has established with his people.’²³ When God’s people break the covenant with God, God takes action to restore the people to that covenantal relationship. Christ’s saving work on the cross is the supreme way,’ that God delivers humanity from both present and future wrath.²⁴ By means of Christ’s ‘vicarious self-offering unto death’ God’s ‘wrath is breached, his wounded covenant love is healed, and the new possibility of covenant relationship in the kingdom of God is opened to all who receive it.’

Despite recognising the seriousness of divine wrath in the Scriptures, the notion of divine wrath was confined to barely eight pages and played little part in his overall argument. There are six other references to divine wrath in the book, but they are concerned with technical issues rather than anything else. Christ’s vicarious sacrifice cancelled divine wrath. Driver analysed the biblical aspects of divine wrath, but quickly dropped it from further consideration after stating it was cancelled by Christ’s work on the cross.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 244-47.

²⁰ Ibid., 246.

²¹ Ibid., 246-47. The italics are in the text.

²² Ibid., 155-62.

²³ Ibid., 155-56.

²⁴ Ibid., 162.

Driver addressed the propitiation / expiation issue in the section on the Expiation Motif and the Wrath of God.²⁵ The critical issue is the translation of *hilasterion* in Romans 3:25, and *hilasmos* in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10. The RSV translates both words as ‘expiation’ whereas the AV renders both as ‘propitiation.’²⁶ According to Driver, expiation refers to an object of an impersonal action that is a sin or impurity, whereas propitiation refers to God as the object of some type of action.²⁷ He favoured the expiation sense rather than the propitiation sense.²⁸ Driver claimed that early Jewish Christians understood Christ’s death as expiation, not as propitiation. Based on the image’s limited use in the New Testament, Driver conjectured that there were fewer audiences that understood this image.²⁹

P. T. Forsyth also took divine wrath seriously, and he incorporated God’s wrath into his argument on atonement. We now consider Forsyth’s perspective in the next section.

P.T. Forsyth and the Holy Love of God

Driver affirmed the reality of God’s wrath, but after looking at it in less than eight pages he discarded it and kept it out of sight. The same cannot be said about P. T. Forsyth. In his writings he dealt with the Holy Love of God, and the wrath of God exploded into a prominent place in Forsyth’s theology of the cross. Costas drew heavily from Forsyth’s concept of the Holy Love of God.

Forsyth’s *The Work of Christ* focused on the cross of Christ.³⁰ Concerning Christ’s death he wrote that ‘no doctrine takes us so straight to the heart of things.’³¹ Spirituality is true and Christian only to the extent that ‘it meets the conditions of Holy Love in the way the Cross did, as the crisis of holy judgment and holy grace.’³²

Forsyth wove the notion of holy love into the fabric of this book. As holy love, holiness characterises God’s love.³³ He developed further this notion of holiness in God’s holy love: ‘God never ceased to love us even when He was most angry and severe with us. It will not do to abolish the reality of God’s anger towards us. True love is quite capable of being angry, and must be angry and even sharp with its beloved children.’³⁴ This dynamic tension between the two is what makes redemption possible because it affirms

²⁵ Ibid., 147-55.

²⁶ Ibid., 147. For further explanation see: ibid., 257, footnote 1 for chapter 8.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 148-55.

²⁹ Ibid., 25.

³⁰ P. T. Forsyth, *The Work of Christ* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910).

³¹ Ibid., v.

³² Ibid., viii.

³³ Ibid., 181.

³⁴ Ibid., 105.

that ‘the same holy will which judges man’s wickedness also loves us and gives His Son for propitiation for us.’³⁵ Jesus Christ is the revelation of God’s holy love, not just divine love only.

This notion of holiness coupled with God’s love led Forsyth to take seriously the reality of God’s judgment: ‘love is not holy without judgment.’³⁶ Elsewhere he wrote: ‘you cannot talk about Christ and His death in any thorough way without talking about the holiness of God.’³⁷ Christian theology begins and ends with the recognition of the reality of divine holiness.³⁸ Therefore Forsyth declared that ‘if the essence of God is that He should be holy, it is equally essential that He should judge.’³⁹

Forsyth stated that holy is the way God is. God can be no other way. Nor can God can choose to be any other way. God

could not trifle with His own holiness. He could will nothing against His holy nature, and He could not abolish the judgment bound up with it. Nothing in the compass of the divine nature could enable Him to abolish a moral law, the law of holiness. That would be tampering with His own soul.⁴⁰

Forsyth recognized that in God’s holy love, judgment and salvation are coupled together. In the work of Christ on the cross

[t]he holiness of God became our salvation not by slackness of demand but by the completeness of judgment; not because He relaxes His demand, not because He spends less condemnation on sin, lets us off or lets sin off, or lets Christ off; but because in Christ judgment becomes finished and final...⁴¹

He acknowledged both the realities of God’s love and God’s holiness, and affirmed that the two must always be kept connected to one another.

Forsyth interpreted the Christ’s death on the cross as ‘the world’s great day of judgment, the crisis of all crises for history.’⁴² On the cross sin was seen at its very worst, and then foiled, judged, and overcome. Christ’s death bore ‘the fundamental, permanent, final changing of the relation between man and God, altering it from a relationship of hostility to one of confidence and peace.’⁴³ Christ’s work, in a word, is reconciliation.

³⁵ Ibid., 169.

³⁶ Ibid., 85.

³⁷ Ibid., 48.

³⁸ Ibid., 18.

³⁹ Ibid., 128.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 112.

⁴¹ Ibid., 160.

⁴² Ibid., 133.

⁴³ Ibid., 54.

Forsyth identified at least three views of the cross. The first view, the Triumphant aspect, focuses on ‘the finality of our Lord’s victory over the evil power or devil.’⁴⁴ The second view, the Regenerative, recognises ‘the finality of [Christ’s] sanctifying or new creative influence on the soul of man.’⁴⁵ Forsyth focused his attention on the third view, the Satisfactionary aspect. This aspect refers to ‘the finality of [Christ’s] satisfaction, expiation, or atonement presented by the holy power of God.’⁴⁶ Forsyth described in substitutionary terms the reconciliatory action of God offering Godself through Christ: ‘God as it were took Him in the place of sin rather than of the sinner, and judged the sin upon Him; and in putting Him there He really put Himself there in our place (Christ being what He was); so that the divine judgment was real and effectual.’⁴⁷

Forsyth valued the perspective of each view, and yet noted that the classic theologians of the doctrine of the atonement affirmed their view only. He saw that there was no ‘coordination of the three aspects under one comprehensive idea, one organic principle, corresponding to the complete unity of Christ’s person.’⁴⁸ Forsyth saw that the three views were like strands that he wove together in order to portray the complete victory in Christ. He calls it the ‘Threefold Cord.’⁴⁹

This cord paints pictures of what Christ’s death on the cross does for sinners. By his substitutionary death Christ delivers sinners from evil, rescues them from Satan, liberates them from bondage, cancels legal charges against them, and releases them from prison. But Christ also gives redeemed sinners to God, ushers them into heaven, grants them complete liberty, puts them on course for a new way of life, grants them eternal life, and makes them innocent and holy.⁵⁰ One view is not sufficient to convey all that Christ had done; all three views are necessary to begin to give an adequate picture of Christ’s work on the cross.

Forsyth declared repeatedly throughout the book that divine judgment had to take place for reconciliation to be established.⁵¹ He stressed the juristic sense of the atonement because he had witnessed how ineffective religion was when such theological realities as judgment, guilt, divine wrath, and reconciliation were neither acknowledged nor experi-

⁴⁴ Ibid., 199.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 83.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 200.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 199.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 202.

⁵¹ Ibid., 229.

enced.⁵² Forsyth was highly critical of what he referred to as Christian Liberalism because it had banished the heuristic element of reconciliation from Christianity, abandoned divine judgment, and lost sight of the supernatural nature of the faith.⁵³

As with Driver, Forsyth valued the plurality of views of the atonement that would provide the most comprehensive picture of the work of Christ on the cross. Whereas Driver dismissed sustained theological reflection on God's wrath, Forsyth placed divine wrath in tension with divine love in his prominent theme of Holy Love. Despite the one reference to propitiation, there is a sense that Forsyth is not comfortable with the concept of substitutionary penal suffering on the part of Christ.⁵⁴ The next section of this chapter, examines the case for penal substitutionary atonement as presented by J. I. Packer.

J. I. Packer and the Logic of Penal Substitutionary Atonement

In 'What Did the Cross Achieve? The Logic of Penal Substitution,' J. I. Packer presented the case for Penal Substitution.⁵⁵ His task was

to focus and explicate a belief which, by and large, is a distinguishing mark of the worldwide evangelical fraternity: namely, the belief that Christ's death on the cross had the character of *penal substitution*, and that it was in virtue that it brought salvation to mankind.⁵⁶

He continued by highlighting the critical importance of penal substitutionary atonement by declaring: 'I am one of those who believe that this notion takes us to the very heart of the gospel because it—penal substitutionary atonement—was God's provision of salvation for humanity.'⁵⁷

Packer surveyed the history of the doctrine. The great figures of the Protestant Reformation—Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Melancthon—were the great pioneers who formulated the doctrine.⁵⁸ In *Cur Deus Homo?* Anselm viewed Christ's death on the cross as an offering of compensation to God for damages or dishonour.⁵⁹ The Reformers, however, perceived that on the cross Christ underwent 'vicarious punishment (*poena*) to meet the claims on us of God's holy law and wrath (*i.e.* his punitive justice).' A critic by the name of Socinus labelled the Reformed notion of punitive justice as 'irrational, inco-

⁵² Ibid., 200.

⁵³ Ibid., 229.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 223.

⁵⁵ J. I. Packer, 'What Did the Cross Achieve? The Logic of Penal Substitution,' *Tyndale Bulletin* 25 (1974), 3-45.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 3. The italics are in Packer's text.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 4.

herent, immoral and impossible.’⁶⁰ He affirmed that repentance was required of the sinner, but certainly no type of satisfaction was demanded.

Packer began his argument by asserting that there are ‘*revealed* models’ that are ‘ways of thought that God himself has taught us for the true understanding of what he has done *for* us and will do *in* us.’⁶¹ Penal substitutionary atonement ‘is a Christian theological model, based on biblical exegesis, formed to focus a particular awareness of what Jesus did at Calvary to bring us to God.’ Furthermore, it ‘is a dramatic, kerygmatic picturing of divine action.’ There are two logical stages of this model. The first stage is that ‘the death of Christ is declared to have been *substitutionary*; then the substitution is characterized and given a specific frame of reference by adding the word *penal*.’⁶² Christ’s death is substitutionary because, on behalf of the sinner, Christ took the sinner’s place on the cross, and died for the sinner’s benefit (Rom. 5:8; Gal. 3:13; Mark 10:45).

Packer evaluated the subjective and classical accounts of Christ’s death and found them to be biblically supported, yet incomplete.⁶³ He proposed a third account that accepts the other two views, but goes further in understanding Christ’s death.⁶⁴ It views humanity as facing the life-threatening assaults of sin, Satan, and divine judgment.⁶⁵ God’s rejection of the sinner is so serious, that unless this divine rejection is replaced by divine acceptance, the sinner is forever separated from God and cut off from life.

Packer recognised that the third account addresses the human problem in a way that the other two do not.⁶⁶ First of all, Christ’s death propitiated God. Another way of understanding it is that God propitiated Godself. Only when God has been propitiated could the powers of evil be overthrown and God’s redemptive love be revealed. The overthrow and the revelation could not have taken place until God was propitiated; both are dependent upon, and the fruit of, propitiation.

Packer’s key point is that by his death on the cross, Christ presented to God satisfaction for sins.⁶⁷ He summed it up this way: ‘by undergoing the cross Jesus expiated our sins, propitiated our Maker, turned God’s “no” to us into a “yes”, and so saved us.’ Pack-

⁶⁰ For recent expressions by evangelicals who are strongly critical of penal substitutionary atonement, see: Steve Chalke, ‘The Redemption of the Cross,’ in *The Atonement Debate: Papers from the London Symposium on the Theology of the Atonement*, ed. Tidball, Hilborn and Thacker (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008): 34-45; Joel B. Green, ‘Must We Imagine the Atonement in Penal Substitutionary Terms? Questions, Caveats, and a Plea,’ in *ibid.*, 153-71.

⁶¹ Packer, ‘What Did Cross?’, 16.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 17. Italics are in Packer’s text.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 20-5.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 20-1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

er acknowledged that this account is expressed in different forms of substitution. But not all these forms include a penal substitutionary view of Christ's work on the cross.

Packer's second logical step in his proposed model used 'penal' to characterise the substitutionary nature of Christ's death on the cross.⁶⁸ Therefore the thrust of the logic of this model asserts that 'Jesus Christ our Lord, moved by a love that was determined to do everything necessary to save us, endured and exhausted the destructive divine judgment for which we were otherwise inescapably destined, and so won us forgiveness, adoption and glory.'⁶⁹ Packer perceived that, for believers, there is a doxological element to penal substitution: it 'is the mainspring of all their joy, peace and praise both now and for eternity.' He clarifies that this model was not offered to clarify the 'mechanics' of atonement, but to bring about a greater understanding of its meaning.⁷⁰ It 'evoke[s] faith, hope, praise and responsive love to Jesus Christ.'⁷¹ Penal substitutionary atonement is at the very heart of the matter of what God has done through Jesus Christ. It is the foundation upon which salvation has been built.

John Stott's *The Cross of Christ*

John Stott contended that 'the cross is at the centre of the evangelical faith,' and, indeed, 'at the centre of the historical biblical faith.'⁷² He acknowledged that 'Evangelical Christians believe that in and through Christ crucified God substituted himself for us and bore our sins, dying in our place the death we deserved to die, in order that we might be restored to his favour and adopted in his family.'⁷³ Stott expressed his intention to recover 'the great biblical concepts' of substitution, satisfaction, and propitiation from the misrepresentation to which they had been subjected, even in evangelical circles during the last half of the 20th century.⁷⁴

Stott contended that 'forgiveness is for God the profoundest of problems' because of the tension between human sin and divine holiness and wrath.⁷⁵ Throughout *The Cross of Christ* he insisted that the gospel is about the cross of Jesus the Messiah being the only basis by which God forgives any and all the sins of women and men. The key issue that Stott identified was that 'God must not only respect' humans as the responsible persons

⁶⁸ Ibid., 25-9.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 26.

⁷¹ Ibid., 27.

⁷² John Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 20th Anniversary ed. (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2006): 12.

⁷³ Ibid., 12.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 15-6.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 130, summing up chapter four, 103-30.

they are, but God ‘must also respect himself as the holy God he is.’⁷⁶ There must be some type of satisfaction for sin as the grounds for God to forgive sinners.

Stott asserted that God must satisfy Godself.⁷⁷ He paid close attention to the language of divine wrath, anger, and judgment found throughout Scripture.⁷⁸ This vocabulary

expresses the inevitable reaction of God’s perfect nature to evil. It indicates that there is within God a holy intolerance of idolatry, immorality and injustice. Wherever these occur, they act as stimuli to trigger his response of anger or indignation. He is never provoked without reason. It is evil alone which provokes him, and necessarily so since God must be (and behave like) God. If evil did *not* provoke him to anger he would forfeit our respect, for he would no longer be God.⁷⁹

Stott noticed that the prophets of ancient Israel recognised that Yahweh’s wrath and judgment on ancient Israel were due to her constant rebellion and infidelity.⁸⁰ But the prophets also asserted that God’s redeeming covenantal love was evident in Yahweh’s character. God loved Israel, but God also judged her. Stott saw this as evidence of God’s holiness and love. He recognised the reality of divine wrath and judgment, yet affirmed that ‘the LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love’ (Ps. 103:10, RSV). Stott identified parallel texts that reflect that God is merciful, restrains divine anger, and delays judgment.⁸¹

In view of God’s holiness and love, Stott’s key issue was how ‘God chooses to forgive sinner and reconcile them to himself’ in a way that is consistent with God’s character.⁸² Stott perceived that God’s love and God’s holiness must be kept in tension in order to preserve the vision of who God truly is. To this end he stated:

We must picture him neither as an indulgent God who compromises in order to spare and spoil us, nor as a harsh vindictive God who suppresses his love in order to crush and destroy us. How then can God express his holiness without consuming us, and love without condoning our sins? How can God satisfy his holy love? How can he save *us* and satisfy *himself* simultaneously?⁸³

To answer those questions Stott focused on divine substitution and divine satisfaction. His understanding of the biblical view of atonement is that ‘the righteous, loving Father humbled himself to become in and through his only Son flesh, sin and a curse for

⁷⁶ Ibid., 130.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 145-56.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 146-51.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 147. The italics are in Stott’s text.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 149.

⁸¹ Ibid., 150. Stott cited Neh. 9:31; Lam. 3:22; Rom. 2:4-16, 3:25; 2Pet. 3:9.

⁸² Ibid., 151.

⁸³ Ibid., 155.

us, in order to redeem us without compromising his own character.’⁸⁴ He sums it up by declaring that ‘[t]he biblical gospel of atonement is of God satisfying himself by substituting himself for us.’ God substitutes Christ in the place of sinners.

Stott not only recognised the holy love nature of God and the reality of God’s wrath and judgment, but he also addressed propitiation as an essential image of atonement.⁸⁵ Along with propitiation Stott has identified redemption, justification, and reconciliation as biblical images that, when viewed as complementary with one another, provide pictures of atonement.⁸⁶ He contends that the image of propitiation is used in the Scriptures in recognition of the reality of ‘God’s holy wrath, his loving self-sacrifice in Christ and his initiative to avert his own anger.’⁸⁷ As Stott surveyed the biblical data, God’s wrath is obvious, as is propitiation by which the wrath is placated.

Stott identified the key issue to be whether several biblical references using the *hilasmos* word group were to be rightly interpreted as ‘expiation’ or ‘propitiation.’⁸⁸ Driver did not see any biblical evidence for propitiation. Stott, however, looked at the biblical data and could not come to any other conclusion than that propitiation was a valid image of atonement. In regards to Romans 3:24-25 and 1 John 2:1-2 and 4:10, Driver and the RSV read expiation and Stott and the AV propitiation.⁸⁹ For the latter, God is the object; God receives the atoning action that results in God’s appeasement. However, Stott did join Driver in affirming that expiation is an essential image of atonement. The sinner is the object that receives the atoning action of the removal of sin and guilt. But Stott, contrary to Driver, recognised that both expiation and propitiation were essential images for understanding the atoning work of Christ. By the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross, sin is forgiven and God’s wrath averted. According to Stott, both expiation and propitiation are necessary for understanding the atonement.

Stott offered reasons why the interpretation of propitiation was crucial to a proper understanding of atonement.⁹⁰ First, propitiation acknowledged the reality of human sin that arouses the wrath of God. God’s anger is ‘steady, unrelenting, unremitting, uncomprom-

⁸⁴ Ibid., 188.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 197-204.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 196.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 197.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 198-202. The issue was briefly discussed above in the section on Driver’s views view of the atonement.

⁸⁹ For a survey of the linguistic issues involved in this issue, see: *ibid.*, 198-202. For more recent biblical studies supporting penal substitutionary atonement, see: I. Howard Marshall, ‘The Theology of the Atonement,’ in *The Atonement Debate*, ed. Tidball, Hilborn, and Thacker, 49-68; Rohintan K. Mody, ‘Penal Substitutionary Atonement in Paul: An Exegetical Study of Romans 3:25-26,’ in *ibid.*, 115-35.

⁹⁰ Stott, *Cross of Christ*, 202-03.

missing antagonism to evil in all its forms and manifestations.’ Second, Stott considered who takes the initiative in atonement. From the perspective of the Old and New Testaments, people did not sacrifice to God to pacify God and make God gracious, rather sacrifices were God’s gifts of grace and mercy so that forgiveness could be offered to sinful people.⁹¹ ‘God’s love,’ Stott wrote, ‘is the source, not the consequence, of atonement.’ Put another way, ‘God does not love us because Christ died for us; Christ died for us because God loved us.’ Furthermore, Stott followed Karl Barth’s theological assertion that God was in Jesus Christ, the Son, and that God offered Godself as the propitiatory sacrifice for humanity.⁹²

Stott also called for all three of the three major views of Christ’s work on the cross to be held together in a complementary way rather than one view being the sole explanation of the death of Christ.⁹³ He especially acknowledged the insight of Forsyth and joined Driver and Packer. Consequently, each view focuses on a particular object of Christ’s atoning work. As Stott saw it, ‘In the “objective” view God satisfies himself, in the “subjective” he inspires humans, and in the “classic” he overcomes the devil. Thus Jesus Christ is successively the Saviour, the Teacher and the Victor, because we ourselves are guilty, apathetic and in bondage.’ The three views of Christ’s work are complementary.

There are at least five times in his chapter on the cross that Costas cited from Stott’s *The Cross of Christ*. Costas referred to Stott when the former asserted that the cross was central to apostolic preaching and evangelisation. At other times Costas used Stott’s biblical data to make certain exegetical points. Both of them affirmed the substitutionary nature of Christ’s death. References to Stott, however, played no part in Costas’s central arguments on the meaning of Christ’s death. Divine wrath and propitiation found no place in Costas’s writings on the atonement.

The Cross in Costas’s Sermon ‘Outside the Gate’

Costas’s 1982 book, *Christ Outside the Gate*, is a collection of his writings that ‘emerge out of the heat and tumble of Christian mission among oppressed people today.’⁹⁴ His sermon, ‘Outside the Gate,’ served as the epilogue of the book.⁹⁵ Costas based it on Hebrews 13:12: ‘So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people

⁹¹ Ibid., 203.

⁹² Ibid., 203-04, referring to: Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance, tr. G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956-57): II, 1, 398-403.

⁹³ Stott, *Cross of Christ*, 268.

⁹⁴ Orlando Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982), xiv.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 188-94.

through his blood.’ The sermon expressed Costas’s understanding of the work of Jesus on the cross in relationship to the Church’s mission to the poor and the oppressed.

As with Driver, Costas recognised the negative impact of Christendom on the life and mission of the Church, and in Costas’s case, the North American Church.⁹⁶ There are various forms of Christendom, but all share ‘the vision of a society organized around Christian principles and values with the church as its manager or mentor.’ Those who live within the ‘compounds of the church’—the ‘insiders’—are saved, legitimatised, supported, blessed, and protected by the Church. There is an alliance between the established religious institutions and other institutions of society. Those who live on the inside ‘share in the “spiritual,” social, economic, and political “blessings” of salvation; those on the outside do not.

In view of Christendom, Costas’s first main point was that Christ died in the wilderness outside the walls of the city.⁹⁷ He was put to death on the cross outside the gate, that is, outside the bounds of the security of the religious community. He died in the periphery amongst the outcast, disenfranchised, and unclean. The term ‘Outside the gate’ stood for everything that Costas had written about the marginalized people who inhabit the underside of history. This first point emphasised where Christ was put to death. He died out among those who are outside society’s established order.

Costas’s second main point addressed the purpose of Christ’s death on the cross. Christ did *not* die for the forgiveness of sin and rescue from God’s wrath; rather Christ did die to bear the fruit of ‘freedom to confess Jesus Christ in the service of outsiders.’⁹⁸ Jesus’ death outside the gate produces believers who are made free from lives lived only for themselves, and set apart to commit their lives to serve others. According to Costas’s reading of Hebrews 13:15-6, believers confess Jesus’ name by sharing their own material possessions with the poor and needy and by working for the general well being of all.

Costas asserted that this new perspective led to a more ample understanding of mission.⁹⁹ Being a follower of Christ entails ‘encountering the crucified Christ in the world of the outsiders and sharing in [Christ’s] suffering for the rejects and outcasts.’ Therefore, Christian mission must be evaluated from the perspective of those who dwell on the periphery. The death of Jesus on the cross demonstrates God’s solidarity with those who dwell on the periphery of the world. Upon seeing Christ’s death outside the gate, peo-

⁹⁶ Ibid., 189-91.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 190-91.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 188-89. Italics are mine.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 191-93.

ple's lives are changed and they are challenged to join with Jesus who stands with the marginalized of society.

Costas's sermon exhibits the Subjective View of Christ's salvific work on the cross. By his death in the wilderness outside the city Jesus became the example of siding with those who dwell there. His life and death become the supreme example of standing with the poor, powerless, and oppressed. People can be so moved and inspired by seeing this that they join Christ there among the people on the periphery. By means of his sermon, Costas was calling his hearers to experience conversion from lives centred on themselves to lives committed to serving others. Costas argued that Jesus did not die for the God's pardon of sin, for protection from God's judgment, or for release from the power of evil. Costas challenged women and men to commit themselves to Christ by joining him in service to those who dwell outside the gate.

The Cross of Christ in Costas's *Liberating News*

Costas used a Trinitarian *missio Dei* formula as the organising principle of the fifth chapter in his *Liberating News*.¹⁰⁰ The Triune God is an evangelising presence in history. The 'mediating sign' of this evangelising presence of the Triune God in the world is the cross of Christ.¹⁰¹ A sign, wrote Costas, 'is a material object that points beyond itself to a spiritual and eschatological reality.' The cross of Christ is a 'symbol of death' that is 'a sign of life and hope.' The preaching of the cross points to the reality of the gospel, the good news of reconciliation of the world to God.

Costas placed the gospel of reconciliation in the all-encompassing theological context of Trinitarian *missio Dei*, the evangelising presence of the Triune God.¹⁰² He perceived that the gospel was the result of two movements of the Trinitarian mission.¹⁰³ In the first movement the holy and loving Father sends the loving and obedient Son into the world. In the second, the Spirit gathers up the world into the Triune God by the Son for the glory of the Father. According to Costas, the first movement is the essence of the gospel.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Costas, *Liberating News*, 71-87.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 80-1.

¹⁰² Ibid., 73-7.

¹⁰³ Costas appreciated the Jürgen Moltmann's theological writings on Trinitarian history. The former used the latter's social metaphor model of the Trinity that was promoted by the Eastern Orthodox tradition. This view located the oneness of God in the eternal Trinitarian community of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For further discussion of this, see: Ibid., 173-74, note three.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 73-4.

In this first movement, the holy and loving Father sends the Son, who obeys the Father in love, and who trusts the Father to provide for him in every way. Using P. T. Forsyth's concept of 'holy love,' Costas wrote that the Father delivering the Son to death on the cross was the supreme demonstration of the holy love of the Father. 'The drama of the cross,' Costas continued, 'is the holy action of the Father's love delivering the Son for the purpose of communion with the world.'¹⁰⁵

Costas addressed the issue of the Son being forced to participate in the deadly matters of the cross.¹⁰⁶ The Father acted out of holy love and the Son responded to the Father with loving obedience. The Son loved the Father and the world, and, therefore, willingly obeyed the Father, even unto his sacrificial death on the cross. The Father, Son, and Spirit were united in their mission to restore communion of the Triune God with humanity. The Son was not forced to die on the cross, but willingly went to his death in obedience to the Father's will. He 'took the place of the entire human race and willingly gave himself out of love to the Father for the world.'¹⁰⁷ Costas described Jesus' giving of himself on the cross as an atoning death. Jesus' atoning death on the cross was the culmination of the Father and the Son acting together out of love for one another and for the world.¹⁰⁸ At the cross the holy love of God the Father intersected with the loving obedience of God the Son.

Although Costas used Forsyth's concept of holy love in his section on the first movement of the trinitarian foundation of the gospel, he diluted it. Costas used the concept of holy love in a subdued sense that omitted any recognition of divine wrath, anger, and judgment. It was exclusively used in reference to divine forgiveness and the restoration of relationship of God with humanity. Forsyth's notion of the crisis of crises brought about by God's holy love was absent from this section. Its use was drained of any reference to the wild fierceness of God's wrath and anger against human sin that Forsyth portrayed so powerfully in his writings.

By referring to the cross as the mediating sign of evangelisation, Costas asserted that the cross was the core of the gospel because the Triune God's reconciling work took place there.¹⁰⁹ The cross reveals the gospel message that the Father did not spare the only begotten Son so that the world might be spared, and that the Son 'offer[ed] himself in a

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 73. There is more about P. T. Forsyth and his concept of holy love in a section above in this chapter.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 74-5.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 75.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 80.

godforsaken death through the Spirit in order to justify a godless world and reconcile it to the Father...' The Father delivers the Son unto death, the Son willingly offers himself as a sacrifice for sin, and '[t]hus the Spirit sets the world free through the crucified Son.' This is an expression of the Objective View of the cross.

Costas also identified the cross as the criterion by which evangelisation is assessed.¹¹⁰ At this point Costas presents the Subjective View of the cross. Persons who live in Christ by faith 'live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised' (2 Cor. 5:15). People who live for Christ experience inner change. Referring to Heb. 13:14-15, Costas understood 'living for Christ' to mean 'living for him *in the world*, in the service of the "others" for whom Christ died.'¹¹¹

But Costas pushed his argument further by referring back to his reading of the text in Hebrews about Jesus suffering outside the gate to sanctify the people and his followers joining him there (13:12-13).¹¹² This meant that '[w]e are not to carry our evangelistic ministry inside but rather outside the comfortable walls of our secure churches. We are to go to the crossroads of life, among the outcast, the unsanctified, proclaiming Christ with sweat, blood, and tears.' It means 'demonstrat[ing] a qualitatively distinct style of life' and labouring for 'the transformation of the social, economic, cultural, and political institutions of society...'¹¹³ Thus all efforts of evangelisation must pass the test of the cross. Jesus is the great example of the way of the cross that Christians are to follow.

In chapter six of *Liberating News* Costas presented his understanding of the message of the cross of Christ.¹¹⁴ The chapter subtitle indicates the essential message of the chapter: there is life and hope through suffering and death. Costas asserted that the gospel is primarily a witness to the atoning death of Jesus on the cross.¹¹⁵ Jesus' death removed the sin that had separated the sinners from communion with God. By Christ's suffering and death on the cross sinners are thereby reconciled to God.

Costas recognised that the New Testament documents presented the crucified Jesus 'as a prophet-martyr *and* the suffering servant of the Lord, as a Passover lamb *and* a "sin-bearing" offering.'¹¹⁶ Jesus lived a righteous life, was faithful to God, and committed himself to the holy love of God. On the cross he stretched out his hands to all people who

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹¹¹ Ibid. Italics are Costas's.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid., 82.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 88-111.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 88-9, and then examined further through page 99.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 96. The italics are in Costas's text.

were outside proper religious society.¹¹⁷ The apostolic church employed the images from the Hebrew Scriptures and non-canonical literature to proclaim the message of life through Jesus' suffering and death.¹¹⁸ Some of the images that Costas identified present Jesus as the Passover Lamb, God's obedient servant, the Son of Man, the faithful and true witness, God's sinless and suffering servant, the Lamb of God, the righteous one who is the expiation for the sins of the world, and the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Through his suffering and death, Jesus' life has been offered as atonement for the sins of the world.¹¹⁹ The essence of chapter seven is revealed in Costas' statement that 'the message of the cross is the announcement of God's gift of life through the suffering and death of the *Easter Christ*.'¹²⁰ By his suffering and death, people receive the gifts of eternal life, have been made a new creation, experience a new order of life, and, Costas's constant refrain, 'are set free to life for God in the service of the world and become thereby signs and instruments for the renewal of the earth.'

In *Liberating News* Costas expressed both the Objective View and the Subjective View of the cross. Regarding the former, Costas stressed that Christ died for the forgiveness of sin that separated God from humanity. 'At the cross,' he wrote, 'God provides and accepts the sacrifice of Christ as God's judgment upon sin and the basis for its forgiveness. Only a holy God who judges sin can be loving and forgiving.'¹²¹ In *Liberating News*, Costas referred to the concept of God's holy love in two places only: in the section in chapter five on the first movement of the trinitarian foundation on the gospel and in this section in chapter six on the message of the cross. The latter is the only place where Costas referred to divine judgment against sin as an expression of God's holy love. The larger context of the reference is Costas's response to Islam's rejection of the cross. The only reference that Costas made to the judgment aspect of holy love was made in response to a secondary issue. Costas never did develop the holiness side of the binomial holy love. Although he was fascinated with the concept of holy love, Costas never used it in the formulation of his theology of contextual evangelisation. He referred to the concept, but the meaning that Forsyth had recognised was cast aside to the periphery of his argument.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 97.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 98.

¹²⁰ Ibid. The italics are Costas's.

¹²¹ Ibid., 102.

In Costas's writings on the cross, the Subjective View was the most prominent view of Christ's salvific work on the cross. He argued that Christ's death outside the gate had a profound effect on people. It so changes those who view his death—especially the place of his death—that they are moved to stand with Christ in solidarity with those who live outside the gate. Their lives are radically reoriented so that they are set free to serve God and people in the world.

Costas did refer to the Classic View, but in a rather subdued sense. By his death and suffering Christ 'overcame the power of sin and death and established a new pattern of existence for those who believe in him.'¹²² Costas agreed with Driver that the three general theories of the atonement should be considered together in order that what Christ accomplished on the cross would be better understood.¹²³ In his *Liberating News*, Costas recognised the Objective View. Yet it did not appear to play any role in the development of his theology of contextual evangelisation. Of the three views, the Subjective View, received the greatest attention in Costas's writings, especially in his sermon 'Outside the Gate.'

Critical Comments

Psalm 106's theological reflection on the historical narrative of Israel in the wilderness stands in contrast to Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation, especially in terms of the relationship between God and humanity. The psalm recounts Israel's liberation from bondage in Egypt by Yahweh. Once freed from their oppression, the people of Israel respond to their liberator with constant stubbornness, complaining, rebelliousness, idolatry, and unfaithfulness. I would contend that the psalm and the rest of Scripture testify to the radical inability of God's liberated people and the rest of humanity to do what is right or just.

In Psalm 106, Yahweh's steadfast faithfulness stands in stark contrast with Israel's constant unfaithfulness. Even when Israel went her own way, God remained faithful to the relationship between Yahweh and the people. There were times in this covenantal relationship when Yahweh stood with Israel and times when God stood against her. When Israel in Egypt cried to Yahweh because of her oppression, God liberated her. When Israel in the wilderness was unfaithful to God, Yahweh was angry and wrathful and stood in judgment against her. The psalm is a picture of God's holy love that was identified by Forsyth.

¹²² Ibid., 98.

¹²³ Ibid., 178, note 30.

In contrast to the psalm's rather unflattering portrayal of Israel in the wilderness is Costas's more favourable view of the people of the periphery. According to Costas, the poor, the powerless, and the suffering are more responsive to the gospel than other people. Those who dwell on the periphery of the world have no one to trust in but God alone. The sermon 'Outside the Gate' and in the first four chapters of *Liberating News* portray the people of the periphery as a type of vanguard of God's kingdom who labour alongside God to construct a new world of peace, justice, and love. The Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song expresses this vision in song.

Costas presented a Subjective View of Christ on the cross in the sermon 'Outside the Gate.' He dismissed any notion of an Objective View of both expiation and propitiation at the beginning of the sermon. Jesus died outside the gate among the people of the periphery. From there, he calls believers in him to come and join him there among the poor, the marginalized, and the oppressed. People who look to Christ outside the gate are transformed from living only for themselves to living in service to others.

But in the fifth and sixth chapters of *Liberating News*, Costas presented a more Objective View of the cross. God provided and accepted Christ's sacrifice on the cross as judgment upon sin and the basis for the forgiveness of sin. The hymn *Amazing Grace!* is back in the discussion. Costas, however, did not connect this view of the cross of Christ to the first four chapters of the book or to his argument for a theology of contextual evangelisation. I wonder if Costas could have left out the Objective View without taking away from his argument. I would argue that it did not contribute anything. Nor did Costas connect the concept of holy love to his theology of contextual evangelisation. He was fascinated with the notion, but he did not draw out the explosive meaning that Forsyth had recognised. Costas did not recognise divine wrath and anger; only once did he mention divine judgment for the forgiveness of sins. He did, however, affirm the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross for the expiation of sins and the restoration of communion of humanity with God.

I would contend that Costas was locked into the oppression / liberation binomial. That was the worldview that set the agenda for his missiology. As an evangelical, he affirmed the centrality of the atoning death of Christ on the cross, but it did not fit into the oppression / liberation motif that had captivated Costas. This same tendency is seen in Costas's handling of God's holy love. Neither the Objective View nor God's holy love contributed anything to Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation. He was not only

singularly focused on the oppression / liberation binomial, but also on the periphery / centre binomial and the poor as the objects of history / subjects of history binomial.

As a result, I would argue that Costas would not have been able to see the binomials of God's holiness / God's love; God's judgment, and wrath / God's redeeming love; and God standing against sinners / God standing with the forgiven. Nor would he have recognised the binomials describing God's people: faithful / unfaithful; grateful / complaining; obedient / disobedient; just / unjust; submissive / stubborn; and right worship / idolatrous. The ideological stance of the 19th century Enlightenment would not have considered these issues, nor would Costas have.

I would assert that Psalm 106 is a divine text that witnesses to the reality of divine wrath, anger, and judgment. This reality is a theme throughout the rest of canonical Scripture. Even though Costas affirmed the authority of Scripture, he did not engage with this reality in his writings. But Driver, Forsyth, Packer, and Stott did. Driver interacted with the biblical data on divine wrath and judgment, but dismissed it as having nothing to do with understanding the work of Christ on the cross. Forsyth, however, took the reality of God's judgment, anger, and wrath seriously and he placed it as an honoured term in the binomial of God's holy love. God is holy, he declared, therefore God judges. In Christ, judgment was finished and final. Judgment and salvation belong together, and therefore form another binomial of cosmic importance. Christ's death on the cross is the great day of judgment, the crisis of all crises. Forsyth affirmed the reality of divine judgment as an expression of God's holy love.

Packer and Stott, both contemporary evangelicals, also took God's wrath, anger, and judgment seriously. They were more specific than Forsyth was about how sinful humanity can enter into a right relationship with a God of judgment, anger, and wrath. They both affirmed penal substitutionary atonement by which Christ's substitutionary death on the cross propitiated God's wrath, anger, and judgment. Packer saw this as the very heart of the gospel and God's provision for salvation. It was a dramatic and kerygmatic picture of divine action. Forsyth, Packer, and Stott affirmed that Christ's death expiated sins and restored fellowship of humanity with God. But God's anger, wrath, and judgment also had to be propitiated. Forsyth was not clear on this, but both Packer and Stott contended that Christ's death on the cross was the means by which God satisfied the judgment of God's holy love and restored men and women to communion with God.

Packer labelled penal substitutionary atonement (PSA) the distinguishing mark of evangelicalism. Stott also affirmed this. But Costas, an evangelical, never acknowledged

PSA. Yet his full and detailed notes in *Liberating News* cover a wide variety of topics: the sources of theology (pp. 150-51, note 2) and the canon of Scripture (pp. 151-53, note 3); Tradition and traditions (pp. 153-54, note 4) and the hermeneutical circle (pp. 154-55, note 8); exegetical methodology (pp. 155-56, note 10) and the critical issues of the book of Esther (161-62, note 6); the differences between the MT and LXX texts of Esther (p. 163, note 10) and God the Father in feminist theology (pp. 170-73, note 2); and different approaches to the Trinity (pp. 173-74, note 3). Costas was thorough in his handling of critical biblical and theological issues, but he never considered the issue of PSA. Surely it was worth at least some comment by Costas.

I would argue that PSA would have contributed to Costas's missiology. It would have loosened the ideological grip that the oppression / liberation and the poor as objects of history / subjects of history binomials had on Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation. PSA takes seriously the reality of divine anger, wrath, and judgment that is lacking in Costas's theology of evangelisation. It also accounts for the universality of human sin and the need for atonement that addresses salvation from God's wrath as well as forgiveness of sins and the restoration of communion. Costas's missiology in *Liberating News* addresses the latter two, but not the former. Costas affirmed multiple images of the work of Christ, yet he did not consider propitiation as a work of Christ. PSA would encourage him on this. Scripture reveals the human need for liberation, the forgiveness of sins, the restoration of communion with God, protection from enemies, the establishment of justice, healing of the sick and wounded, the lifting up of the broken hearted, and the building up of community. Why is deliverance from God's wrath so offensive?

PSA also takes sin seriously. Stott pointed to God's holy intolerance of idolatry, immorality, and injustice. Those fall under divine judgment. The judging God deals with the brutal 500 years of the brutal history of the Third World that offended Costas so much. Christ outside the gate has no impact in history. I would contend that if there is no divine judgment on injustice, there is no hope. There is a place for standing with the poor in solidarity with those outside the gate, but there is also the place for God's judgment, anger, and wrath against all injustice, oppression, exploitation, and violence.

Packer described PSA as the distinguishing mark of evangelicalism. He also referred to it as the heart of the gospel, a dramatic and kerygmatic picture of what God did for salvation of the world. 'Amazing Grace!', the great anthem of evangelicalism sings of that. But the Cuban-Nicaraguan gospel song was Costas's song. 'Amazing Grace!' was put off to the side. PSA would have addressed the imbalance. There certainly is a place for the

gospel song, but there is also a place for the great evangelical anthem. I would suggest that PSA would have brought a balance to Costas's theology

The most important contribution that PSA would have brought to Costas's missiology would be its challenge to the Costas's assertion that God stands primarily with the oppressed, powerless, and suffering. It is true to some extent, but that is not the gospel. PSA proclaims that God primarily stands with those who put their trust in what Christ did on the cross. PSA is about the gospel of God's grace and mercy to those who deserve God's anger, wrath, and judgment: the oppressor, the unjust, the exploiter, the torturer, the violent, the rapist, the abuser, the tyrant, and so on. Costas's theology of contextual evangelisation has nothing for them.

What do we do when the oppressed become the oppressors, the exploited the exploiters, the abused the abusers, the tortured the torturer? What do we do when our revolutions fail? What do we do when we deserve every measure of God's judgment and wrath for what we have done? Costas's missiology offers us nothing in this regard, but PSA does. PSA is about God's grace and mercy to those who deserve nothing but God's judgment. I do not see any indication in Costas's writings that he was looking for that. It was not a concern of his. PSA only makes sense to those who recognise the reality of divine judgment, anger, and wrath, and the radical inability of humanity to do what is right and just.

Chapter Conclusions

In his latter writings, Costas favoured a Subjective View of the work of Christ on the cross. In *Liberating News* he did interact with the Objective View of atonement. He affirmed that Christ's substitutionary death on the cross was for the forgiveness of sins and the restoration of broken communion between God and humanity. Costas engaged with multiple images and theories of the work of Christ, but did not give any attention to propitiation. Psalm 106 presents a different narrative that recognises the realities of divine wrath and the radical inability of humans to do what is right and just. PSA would have addressed these issues raised by the psalm.

CONCLUSIONS

Towards the end of his life, Costas cited a poem entitled 'It is not finished, Lord' by G.A. Studdert Kennedy. In the first two stanzas the poet declares his weakness and futility. In the third stanza he writes: 'And yet there is a faith in me / That Thou wilt find in it / One word that Thou canst take / And make / The centre of a sentence / In Thy book of poetry.' The poet continues in the fifth stanza: 'I can but hand it in, and hope / That Thy great mind, which reads / The writings of so many years, / Wilt understand this scrawl / And what it strives to say - and leaves unsaid.' Costas died before he was able to finish his *Liberating News*, the first volume of what he had planned to be his multi-volume work on a theology of contextual evangelisation.

Yet the late Orlando E. Costas's missiological writings are much more than one word of a sentence and more meaningful than a scrawl. His substantial writings have warranted the critical research for at least ten academic articles, theses, and dissertations. This conclusions section focuses on four critical issues that arose in the course of this thesis: preferential option for the poor, *la pastoral*, trinitarian *missio Dei*, and penal substitutionary atonement.

Preferential Option for the Poor

During the course of this thesis, I used Psalm 106 to critically interact with the narrative of preferential option for the poor—or periphery—(POP) that is the key and unifying concept of Costas's missiological writings. The psalm is a complete literary unit that presents the psalmist's theological reflection on the historical narrative of Israel in the wilderness after Yahweh had liberated the people from slavery in Egypt.

I critically read the text using the historical-grammatical method of biblical interpretation. Recognizing that I am not an objective reader of the Scriptures, I sought to draw out of the text the meaning of the original author as best as I could. I did this by paying critical attention to lexical, grammatical, and syntactical details; to literary structure, relationships, and form; and to the literary, historical, and theological contexts. I was determined to understand the logical development of thought of the psalmist through the psalm. The main idea that emerged from this critical reading was that of the unceasing faithfulness of Yahweh towards Israel despite Israel's constant unfaithfulness in relation to her liberator.

Theological issues arose as a result of the critical reading of the text: the reality of Yahweh's judgment, wrath, and anger on Israel, and the reality of recently-liberated Israel's continual rebellion against God. These examples of Yahweh's judgment and Israel's unfaithfulness are not confined to Psalm 106 alone. Reading Psalm 106 from biblical-theological approach links the reality of Yahweh's judgment to the prominent biblical theme of divine judgment, and Israel's constant rebellion against Yahweh with another prominent biblical theme of radical human fallenness. There is the potentially uncomfortable issue that Yahweh expresses judgment, anger, and wrath on the poor, vulnerable, and needy people of Israel, a people whom God had recently liberated from Egyptian oppression. This raises questions regarding Costas's preoccupation with preferential option for the poor: God exercised judgment against the poor that was not based on their vulnerability and marginalization, but on their unfaithfulness to God.

A prominent theme throughout Scripture is that God demands that justice be done. It is the duty of all humankind, not just of God's people. God obligates all people to exercise justice in relation to the neighbour; the widow, the orphan, and the alien; to the poor, the needy, the vulnerable, the blind, the captives, and the oppressed; and to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. It is a scriptural imperative that justice be done. In Matthew 25: 31-46, a foundational POP text, the Son of Man judges and sends into eternal punishment those who did not do justice to the least of these. As an evangelical, Costas affirmed the authority of the Bible to command obedience and to reveal God's nature. There is a biblical imperative to do justice. The Matthew 25 passage portrays divine judgment on those who do not do justice to the least of these; Psalm 106 portrays divine judgment on poor, vulnerable, and needy Israel because of her infidelity. Costas's case for POP is not as evident as he made it to be. Furthermore, the notion of divine judgment is absent from his missiological reasoning.

Costas's writings reflect that his missiological journey was driven and shaped by the concept of preferential option for the poor. Even though Costas used that term infrequently, POP was the key concept and organizing theme of his missiological writings in the 1980s. The concept denotes the gospel imperative to seek the spiritual and physical well-being of the poor, the vulnerable, and the needy. In Costas's parlance, the people who are the recipients of the preferential option are referred to as the people of the *periphery*. He maintained that the people of the periphery are the most willing to trust in God alone because they have no one else in whom they can trust. Everything that God

has done and what God calls the Church to do is centred on preferential option for the people of the periphery. POP is Costas's missiological default setting.

Psalm 106 is used in this thesis as a counter-narrative to bring into question Costas's preoccupation with POP in his missiological reflection. The psalmist portrays Yahweh liberating poor and oppressed Israel from bondage in Egypt and leading them out into the wilderness. Rather than living in covenantal obedience with her liberator, Israel takes opportunity to sabotage the coming of Yahweh's reign. Israel's behaviour was characterized by unrelenting rebellion, idolatry, infidelity, disobedience, and stubbornness. In response, Yahweh did not exercise preferential option for poor, vulnerable, and needy Israel, but stood in judgment, anger, and wrath against her. The same pattern is repeated in the book of Judges. Costas did not see this pattern because of his preoccupation with POP.

There is also a biblical-theological perspective on POP. POP is not the only preferential option in Scripture; there are others. In the Hebrew Scriptures, Yahweh exercises a preferential option for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for the covenant community bound by the sign of circumcision; and for David and his sons, chosen by God as a royal and messianic lineage. Yahweh promises solidarity with those with whom God makes covenant. In the New Testament, the Triune God exercises a preferential option for those who believe and are baptised in the Name; for those who partake of his body and blood at the Lord's Table; and even for two or three gathered together in Jesus' name. In Scripture, POP is *a* significant preferential option; but in Costas's writings, it is *the* one and only preferential option. POP also prevents him from engaging with the dual realities of divine judgment, wrath, and anger, and the radical fallenness of humanity.

La Pastoral and Holistic Mission

Between Lausanne '74 and Lausanne II (1989), there emerged in the Lausanne Movement a missiological orientation that has become known as holistic mission (HM). It is the subject of chapter seven of this thesis. Costas participated in the ongoing discussion in Lausanne circles until the early 1980s. Since the early 1970s, however, he had been involved with the formation of a different expression of holistic mission, *la pastoral* (LP), the subject of chapter five of this thesis. Costas's LP presents a complementary, yet different, missiological orientation.

The key issue that is at the heart of HM is the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility in the Church's mission. There were evangelicals who contended for

the primacy of evangelism and others who envisioned that both are Christian duties. There were international congresses, consultations, and conferences where a consensus finally resolved the tension in favour of the dual nature of the Church's mission.

Costas was actively involved with that much needed process that the worldwide evangelical movement had to go through. But the issue of the relationship between evangelism and social action was not an issue of *la pastoral*. LP was critically concerned with the Latin American Church engaging with Latin American people in their concrete historical situations of injustice, oppression, dependency, and exploitation. He drew from the collected experience and reflection of Latin American Roman Catholic and Protestant pastoral theologians. A loose association of committed Latin American evangelical ministry practitioners shared critical social analyses of Latin American situations and critical reflection on the evangelical church's mission engagements with the people in those situations.

The essence of HM is expressed by the banner slogan commonly found in Lausanne Movement circles: 'The whole Church taking the whole gospel to the whole world.' HM is dual natured; it is both evangelism and social action, word and deed. It is comprehensive and all-inclusive. No area of life is excluded from the reach of holistic mission. HM engagements are intentional and purposeful, often directed to specific social issues. In contrast, *la pastoral* focused on Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, who saves humanity from the misery of the human condition of sin and death. God is immersed into the struggles of humanity and calls the Church to do the same by immersing herself into particular concrete historical contexts of life. In LP, therefore, attention is given to the use of social critical analytical tools to identify and examine social issues. This is not as evident in HM.

LP is more relational and situational than HM, and thus open-ended and not directed to specific social issues. There is an emphasis on the Church waiting, listening, and sensing. It means moving in and dwelling with people in their own situations in space and time; there is not a prearranged plan of action. The focus is on a relationship with a person or community rather than on a social issue to be addressed. LP is varied because human life is varied. In LP, immersion is the key way that the Church engages with people in history.

There is a strong theological foundation in the documents that contributed to the formulation of HM. The same can be claimed for Costas's writings that expound the nature of LP, but he often did so with a distinctly *la pastoral* flavour. For example, the docu-

ments affirming holistic mission usually contain a confession of Jesus Christ as Lord. Jesus is the Lord of all areas of life. HM brings all of life, every area of life, under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Rather than confessing Jesus Christ as Lord over all, LP focuses on Jesus as the good shepherd who, through the Spirit, dwells with every person in their concrete historical situation of life. No area of life is out of reach of Jesus' presence by the Spirit. Mission is not necessarily about bringing every aspect of life under Christ's lordship, but about discerning Jesus' presence in every particular context in history.

Trinitarian language is amply used to provide a theological foundation in the documents that present HM. Trinitarian formulations are also foundational in Costas's writings on LP, but he developed it further. He coupled trinitarian *missio Dei* formulations with biblical shepherding imagery and vocabulary. Thus *la pastoral*'s theological foundation is the Triune God who is the missionary God who acts pastorally in history. The Church is sent by the Triune shepherd God to engage pastorally in history. Just as the Triune shepherd God is immersed in the struggles of life, so the Church is sent by the Triune God on the pastoral mission to be immersed in human history. In HM, mission and evangelisation are the same thing; in LP, mission and pastoral mission are the same.

Both HM and LP engage with critical socio-economic and political issues of the day. But because LP also engages with persons in their particular concrete historical situations, it intentionally addresses serious social and psychological concerns that arise from persons living in a broken and fragmented world. HM stresses the Church's mission engagement with life and death social issues of the day; LP focuses on the Church joining with Jesus as the good shepherd by immersing herself in the historical concrete situations of broken and lost people.

In 1989, HM's key concept of the dual nature of mission as evangelism and social action was locked into place in the evangelical mission consciousness by Lausanne II's *Manila Manifesto*. Also in 1989, Costas's posthumously-published *Liberating News* presented a theology of contextual evangelisation. The shepherding imagery and vocabulary of LP were omitted, but the essential elements of *la pastoral* were still there: the Triune missionary God who is immersed in history, the presence of Christ who immersed himself in concrete historical situations of life, and the Triune God's call to the Church to be immersed in history. It is an expanded expression of *la pastoral*.

Trinitarian *Missio Dei*

Trinitarian *missio Dei* (TMD) broke up Costas's singular focus on preferential option for the poor. TMD provided a grand theological narrative of the cosmic redemptive movements of the Triune missionary God. In the fifth chapter of *Liberating News*, it broke the hold that POP had on Costas and opened his missiology up to the grand theological narrative of TMD. Despite his preoccupation with POP that was expressed through the Christ outside the gate narrative, Costas had the theological sensitivity and acumen to engage with TMD. By doing so, his missiology opened up to other significant theological themes. Trinitarian *missio Dei* vanquished the restraining and confining effects of POP in Costas's last missiological writing.

Enriched by TMD, Costas's writing in the final four chapters of *Liberating News* breaks through the constraints of Christ outside the gate and POP and brings other concepts into his missiological dialogue. Costas's missiology paid serious attention to cosmic redemptive acts of the Triune missionary God. By means of this grand theological narrative, he envisioned the Church being caught up into the Triune God's mission in history. Trinitarian *missio Dei* reflects the eucharistic proclamation of the mystery of faith (Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again) in a way that POP does not.

By means of trinitarian *missio Dei*, Costas's missiological thought was connected to other doctrines. TMD led Costas to finally incorporate an objective view of the cross of Christ and salvation by grace through faith into his missiological thought that had, until then, been focused entirely on POP. Costas interacted with credal Christianity, the Christian faith as summarised by the ancient catholic Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. He had been focusing theologically on the pillar of the Incarnation, but as a result of TMD, Costas brought atonement and the Triune nature of God into his missiological reflection. Thus Costas's theology of mission draws from more than evangelical holistic missiology; it engages with the credal pillars of the Church universal. It falls into step with the cosmic drama of God's mission: Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation / Consummation. No longer is Costas's narrative confined to the suffering Christ outside the gate in the periphery of the world.

But the introduction of trinitarian *missio Dei* into Costas's thought did not mean the banishment of preferential option for the poor. In the four final chapters of *Liberating News*, Costas grounded the cosmic redemptive movements of the Triune missionary God in the concrete historical situations of POP. TMD provides the larger theological context for engaging with the socio-economic and political issues that is demanded by standing

in solidarity with the poor, the oppressed, and the needy. Costas coupled POP with TMD: the historical, concrete, and particular with the cosmic and universal. The former grounded the latter in history and defended it from becoming abstract, and thus divorced from history; the latter provided the former with meaning of a larger theological context. Each is incomplete without the other, and each is enhanced by the other. The relationship between the two is complementary. Trinitarian *missio Dei* broke the theological grip of Costas's singular focus on the preferential option for the poor.

Penal Substitutionary Atonement

Scripture reveals that God demands humans to act justly, especially to the poor, vulnerable, and needy. To act unjustly towards them is sin that warrants divine anger, wrath, and judgment. Furthermore, Scripture reveals and history illustrates that the generations have exhibited the radical inability to do justice and their incessant availability to do every manner of injustice. They have not been able to meet God's demand that humankind live justly. The God of holy love judges all human action that does not meet God's demands for justice. Scripture portrays God's wrath, anger, and judgment in tandem with God's unrelenting redeeming love. Divine anger and wrath are not irrational or out-of-control, but restrained, purposeful, and redemptive. The text on the final judgment in Matthew 25 — whether taken literally or figuratively—points to the seriousness of eternal judgment to those who do not exercise justice to 'the least of these.'

Thus arises the profound and abiding question of how the person who fails to meet God's standards of doing justice is able to stand before the holy God of just judgment. There is no indication in Scripture that God lowers the standards of justice so that all but the worst offenders would be found not guilty; nor does Scripture provide evidence that God simply dismisses the charges of injustice committed by humans and moves on to the more important matters of manifesting divine love. Both of these greatly betray God's nature as holy love. God's character cannot tolerate any sense of injustice; it has no place in God's character or reign. The God of holy love takes sin seriously. Any form of sin—whether injustice, brutality, oppression, abuse, exploitation, murder, domination, or whatever—receives the full extent of divine judgment, wrath, and anger. God would not be the God of holy love if God did not judge these as sin.

So the question still remains: how is the sinner able to stand before the God of judgment and wrath? That was not a question Costas ever asked in his writings. In the second

half of Costas's last book, he interacted briefly with an objective view of the atonement and with Forsyth's concept of holy love; but neither one of them play a part in the formulation of Costas's missiology. Suffering, transformation, and 'being sinned against' captured his attention, but the issues connected with atonement did not.

Penal substitutionary atonement (PSA) is a kerygmatic picture of the way God atoned for the unjust person's failure to do justice as God demands. Failure to do the justice that God demands warrants divine wrath, anger, and judgment. Christ acted justly in every way; he never acted unjustly in any way. On the cross, Christ took the place of fellow humans who never acted justly and always acted unjustly. The truly just Jesus Christ took the place of the truly unjust. The former did this for the benefit of the latter. Because God justly judges injustice, the truly just Christ received the full measure of divine wrath, anger, and judgment and the truly unjust received divine mercy, pardon, and salvation. PSA is the foundation of God's salvation for humankind: it is the heart of the gospel. Without this atoning action of the Triune God, the unjust warrant eternal separation from God and life.

Costas was passionately committed to following Jesus outside the gate to stand in solidarity with those who dwell in the periphery of the world; to serve the least of these: the poor, the marginalized, and the needy. Jesus is the Incarnate Son of God who identified himself with the poor, the suffering, and the needy of the world; his death on the cross is the supreme manifestation of God's suffering love. This sense of the gospel is addressed to the victims of injustice and every person who suffers. POP recognises that, but it fails to see the heart of the gospel, PSA. It is the Triune God's response to the life and death question of how the unjust, the oppressor, the dominator, the abuser, the torturer, the murderer, the rapist, the exploiter—anyone who, even in the slightest way, acts unjustly—can stand before the thrice holy God

PSA is the totally divine action by which the wholly just God makes the totally unjust totally just. Atonement is entirely devoid of human action. Therefore the gospel is the announcement of what God has through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. It is also the invitation for the unjust to be made just by grace through faith in what God has done through the just acts of Christ. Thus the gospel is the message of what God has done through Jesus Christ; contrary to POP, it is not a divine imperative of what humans must do for the poor. Contrary to Costas, the good news of Jesus Christ is not proclaimed in word and deed. The redemptive action of God has been completed in Christ. It is finished. No human deeds can ever add to what God has done in Christ on the

cross. It is made manifest at the Lord's Table when the mystery of faith is proclaimed: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Human works of justice flow out of this divine action through Jesus Christ.

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